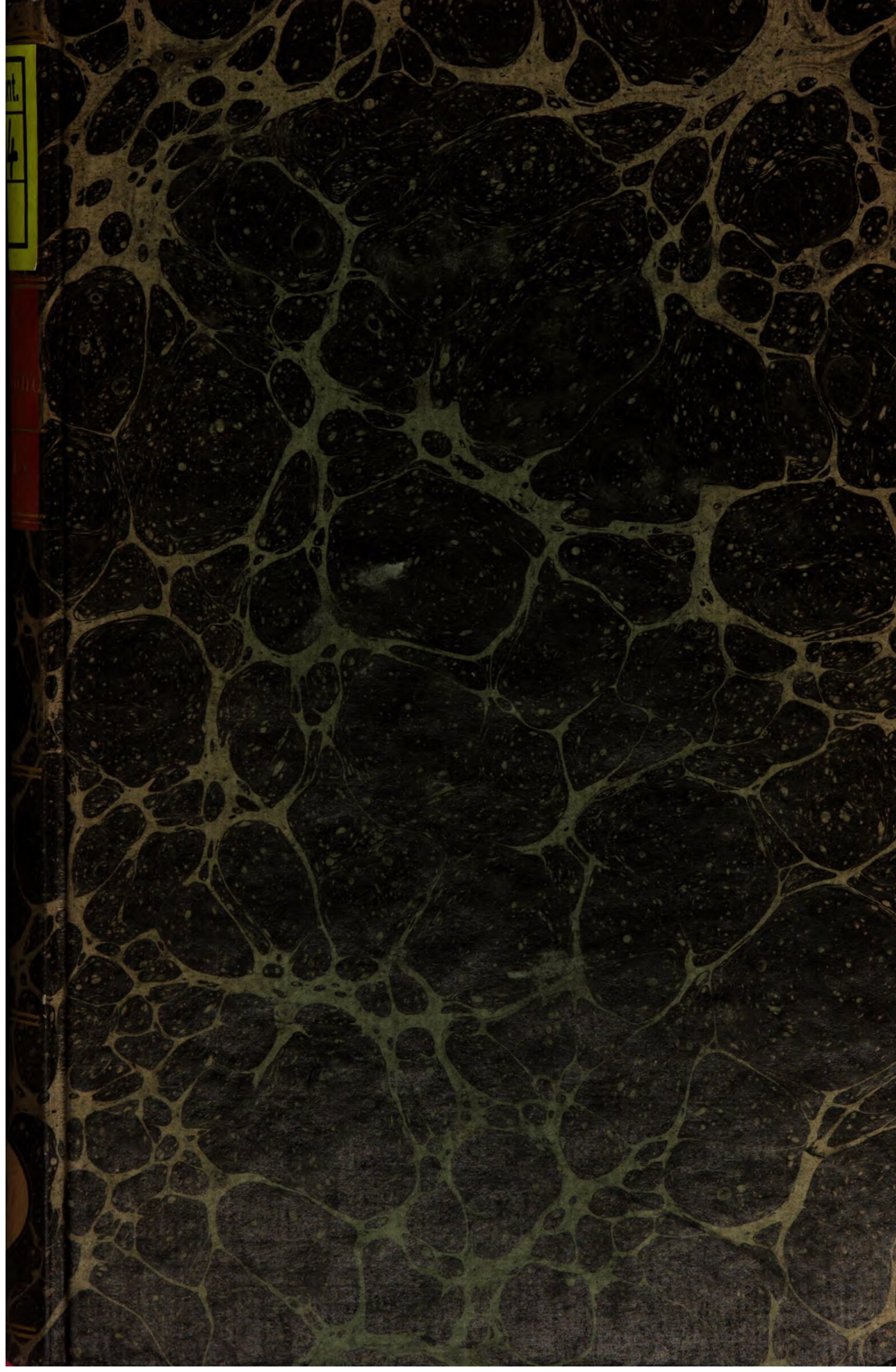




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T R A V E L S
I N
S W I T Z E R L A N D,

A N D I N T H E
C O U N T R Y O F T H E G R I S O N S:
I N A S E R I E S O F L E T T E R S T O *WILLIAM MELMOTH*, Esq.

F R O M
WILLIAM COXE,

M. A. F. R. S. F. A. S.

To which are added the Notes and Observations of
Mr. RAMOND, translated from the French.

A NEW EDITION

Embellished with a large new Map, and six Views
drawn by BIRMAN and engraved under his direction.

VOL. I.

B A S I L:

Printed and sold by JAMES DECKER.

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FROM
Là habite un peuple simple, bienfaisant, ennemi
du faste, ami du travail.

To which are added the Notes and Observations of
Mr. Raymond, translated from the French.

A NEW EDITION
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ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is with pleasure that we introduce to the public a new edition of Mr. COXE's sketches, a work whose merit has been loudly acknowledged by the repeated impressions of it in Great Britain, and the different translations that have been made of it into the languages of the most polite nations of Europe.

Of these translations that by Mr. RAMOND deserves particular notice. This gentleman says in his preface: "We travelled, or rather rambled on foot over the mountains, without following any road, accompanied by a native of the country: sacrificing all the comforts to the end of our journey, we sought for an hospitable reception in the remotest cottages, and lived like brothers with the shepherds whom we visited, without letting them suspect that curiosity alone brought us among them. I may, therefore,

presume to add here and there a trait to the description of the English traveller, an observation on the manners and customs of the country, some interesting reflection: — nor shall I ever lose sight of Mr. COXE; my design being rather to finish his picture, than to exhibit one of my own.”

The observations of this sensible traveller we have subjoined in the form of notes to the letters of Mr. COXE.

As since the last original edition the number of maps and publications on Switzerland has been considerably increased, we have substituted to the author's catalogues new ones, in which the different publications are ranged in a systematical order; and to satisfy the curiosity of the dilettanti, we have added a list of Landscapes, Views, Dresses, &c. of Switzerland.

Mr. COXE's *Faunula* having been enlarged to a complete Natural History of Switzerland by a writer well known in the republic of

letters , will be published in a separate volume.

It was our intention to have prefixed to the present work a short account of the late revolution of Helvetia ; but the whole history of this republic has been very lately published by Mr. PLANTA, and we shall shortly have the satisfaction of presenting the reader with that masterly performance.

As for the Map and the Views which embellish the present edition : the former is entirely new , and reduced from the great atlas of Switzerland , in sixteen sheets, the best , neatest, and most accurate map that ever has been made of any country ; the latter were drawn on the spot by Mr. BIRMANN , a first-rate landscape-painter of Switzerland , and engraved under his direction.

We have only to add, that it will appear from the various additions and embellishments, that we have not been sparing in our endeavours to render these volumes deserving the approbation of the public.

letters will be published in a separate
 volume. The present work is a short account of the
 history of the art of painting in the
 revolution of 1789, but the whole is
 full of interesting facts and very much
 published by the artist, and is well
 illustrated by the exhibition of painting
 the reader will find many interesting
 facts for the artist and the views which are
 behind the present exhibition: the former is an
 map now, and taken from the great atlas
 of Switzerland in sixteen sheets, the best
 map of the country now that ever was
 been made of any country: the latter were
 drawn on the spot by the painter, a full
 size landscape-painter of Switzerland, and
 engraved under his direction. The work is
 We have only to add, that it will appear
 from the numerous additions and engravings
 inserted, that we have not been sparing in
 our exertions to render these volumes de-
 serving the approbation of the public.

DEDICATION

TO THE

C O U N T E S S

O F

PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY,
BARONESS HERBERT, &c. &c.

M A D A M,

THE following letters relating to Switzerland naturally claim your Ladyship's protection; for they were originally written while I had the honor of accompanying Lord HERBERT upon his travels. I feel myself highly flattered, therefore, in having the permission of inscribing them to your

Ladyship, and of thus publicly acknowledging that I am, with great respect, and gratitude for obligations received from the EARL OF PEMBROKE and your Ladyship,

MADAM,

Your Ladyship's

most obedient and

obliged humble servant,

WM COXE.

THE
AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

TEN years have elapsed since I gave to the public a volume of Letters, under the title of, "*Sketches on the Natural, Civil, and Political State of Switzerland.*" The favourable reception of that work induced me, in 1779, to make a journey through the country of the Grisons, a part of Switzerland hitherto little known. Having, in 1785 and 1787, opportunities of revisiting the same spots which I had before described, I was anxious to revise and augment my former publication. With this view I compared my descriptions at the very places, which I attempted to delineate; attentively perused the criticisms of succeeding travellers; and in many of the principal towns, I entreated several persons, of political or literary eminence, to correct any errors, or to suggest any improvement, with respect to those particular parts, with which, from situation, they were most conversant.

The materials collected from these and other sources, increased by my own observations and researches, encourage me to hope, that the present improved account of so interesting a country as Switzerland, will not be unacceptable to the public, and will be considered as a new work.

In regard to the former publication on Switzerland, I acknowledge my obligations to Colonel FLOYD, for the use of the accurate journal which he kept during our joint tour, and to the judicious animadversions of the elegant writer to whom these Letters are addressed. For this improved work I hold myself no less indebted for various communications from THOMAS PENNANT, Esq. and DAVID PENANNT, Esq.; and to the kind assistance of Dr. PULTENEY, the Rev. THOMAS MARTYN, Professor of Botany in the University of Cambridge, and the Rev. RICHARD RELHAN.

Bemerton, Feb. 20, 1789.

CONTENTS

OF THE

FIRST VOLUME.

LET.

1. *ROUTE through the Black Forest—Source of the Danube.* - - Page 1
2. *Arrival in Switzerland—Schaffhausen—Fall of the Rhine.* - - - 3
3. *Isle of Reichenau—Constance—Genevan Establishment—Isle of Meinau—Lake of Constance.* - - - 12
4. *St. Gallen—Canton of Appenzel.* - 20
Observations on the Canton of Appenzel by the French Translator. - - 28
5. *Valley of the Rhine—The Lake and Town of Wallenstadt.* - - - 30

LET.

<i>The French Translator's Observations on the lake of Wallenstadt.</i>	-	Page 36
6. <i>The Canton of Glaris.</i>	-	38
<i>Part of the French Translator's journey</i>		48
7. <i>The Abbey of Einsidlin—Rapperschwyl.</i>		62
<i>Part of the French Translator's journey.</i>		68
8. <i>Town and Canton of Zurich.</i>	-	71
9. <i>Ecclesiastical Affairs—State of Literature—Learned Men of Zurich—Society of Physics—Seminaries—Libraries.</i>		86
<i>The French Translator's Observations on the city of Zurich.</i>	-	102
10. <i>Expedition along the Borders of the Lake of Zurich—Rychterschwyl—Isle of Ufnau—Rapperschwyl—Grunengen—Ustar—Greifensee—Excursion to Regensburg, and to the Summit of the Lagerberg.</i>		104
11. <i>Winterthur—Castle of Kyburgh.</i>		118
12. <i>Frauenfeld—Of the Helvetic Confederacy—Diets.</i>	-	122
13. <i>Route by Water from Zurich to Baden—Bridge of Wettingen—Baden—Castle of Hapsburgh.</i>	-	128
14. <i>Kœnigsfelden—Windish—Voyage down the Rhine.</i>	-	135
15. <i>The Town of Basle—Erasmus—Library—Holbein.</i>	-	142

LET.

16. *Government of Basle.* - Page 152
17. *Combat at the Hospital of St. James, between the Forces of Louis Dauphin of France, and a Corps of Swiss Troops—Ruins of Augst—Mulhausen.* - 160
18. *Bishopric of Basle—Porentru—Abbey of Bellelay—Arlesheim—Delmont—Valley of Munster—Pierre Pertuis—Valley of St. Imier.* - 168
19. *The Town of Bienne.* - 184
20. *The Town and Canton of Soleure—Detail of the Government—Ancient and New Burghers—Assembly of the Rosengarten.* 188
21. *Treaties with France—Reflections on Foreign Service.* - - - 207
22. *The Canton of Zug.* - - 214
23. *The Town and Canton of Lucerne—General Pfiffer's Model.* - - 217
24. *Valley of Entlibuch—Zoffingen—Lake of Sempach—Anniversary of the Battle.* 231
25. *The Lake of Lucerne—Gersau—Schweitz—Origin of the Helvetic Confederacy—William Tell—Altorf.* - - 237
26. *Canton of Unterwalden—Sarne—Saxelen—Tomb and Character of Nicholas de Flue—Stantz—Engelberg—Passage over the Suren Alps to Altorf.* - - 250

LET.

27. *Valley of Schoellenen — Devil's Bridge —
Valley of Urseren — Valley and Mountain
of St. Gothard — Sources of the Tesino and
Reufs* - - - Page 268
*The French Translator's Observations on
the Passage of the St. Gothard.* 279
28. *Passage and Glacier of the Furca — Source
of the Rhone.* - - - 286
29. *Mount Grimsel — Source of the Aar — Of
the Chamois.* - - - 331

MAPS AND PLATES.

A new Map of Switzerland, reduced from the great Atlas of Helvetia, in sixteen sheets, taken from actual measurements, by Mr. WEISS, geographer to the French army on the Rhine, assisted by several gentlemen of this country, eminent for geographical knowledge. This is the neatest and best map that ever has been made of this country.

Six views taken on the spot by Mr. BIRMANN, one of the first landscape painters in Switzerland and engraved under his direction by REINERMANN, of

The Lake of the *Four Cantons*.

The Lake of *Lawerz*.

The Fall of the *Reichenbach*.

The Fall of the *Staubbach*.

The Lake of *Brienzen*.

The Glacier of the *Grindelwald*.

LETTERS, &c.

LETTER 1.

Route through the Black Forest — Source of the Danube.

Doneschingen, July 21, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I AM now at Doneschingen, in my way towards Switzerland; a country long celebrated for the peculiarities of its different governments, and for the singular beauties conferred upon it by nature. If it will not be trespassing upon your patience, I propose to trouble you with some account of my tour. For I am persuaded, that I shall travel with much greater profit to myself; as the reflection that my observations are to be communicated to you, will render me more attentive and accurate in forming them.

We quitted Straßburgh yesterday, and crossed the Rhine to Kehl, formerly an important fortress belonging to Straßburgh when an imperial city. It was also strongly fortified by the French, who took possession of it in 1648: being ceded to the Empire at the peace of Ryfwic, the Emperor conigned it to the house of Baden, reserving, however, to himself the right of a garrison. Since that period, it has been twice attacked by the French: and as during the last siege, in 1733, the works were considerably damaged, the imperial garrison has been withdrawn. At present,

there are only the ruins of the ancient fortifications; and by way of garrison, a few invalids belonging to the Margrave of Baden. From thence we proceeded to Offenburgh, a small imperial town; and soon after, entered the beautiful valley of Kinsing: we passed through Gengenbach, another small imperial town, finely situated; and continued our journey by the side of the small river Kinsing; rising gradually for several leagues together, until we found ourselves in the midst of the Black Forest. As we ascended, the country became more wild and romantic, and the river more rapid; on each hand mountains, whose acclivities were finely cultivated, and whose tops were richly covered with a continual forest. Several small streams of the clearest water rolled down the sides of the mountains, in numberless cascades; and uniting, fell into the Kinsing. The views were so exceedingly diversified; the villages so delightfully situated; and the cottages so extremely picturesque, that we almost seemed to have anticipated the romantic beauties of Switzerland.

Doneschingen is the principal residence of the prince of Furstenberg: in the court-yard of his palace, the Danube takes its rise. I am this moment returned from visiting the spot; the description of which may be comprised in a few words. Some small springs bubbling from the ground, form a basin of clear water, of about thirty foot square: from this basin issues the Danube, which is here only a little brook. And though the two small rivers of Bribach and Brege, uniting below the town, are far more considerable than this stream, which flows into them soon after their junction; yet the latter alone has the honor of being called

the source of the Danube. After we had gone through the ceremony of striding across the stream, in order to say, that we had *stepped* over the Danube, we soon satisfied our curiosity; the object itself being in no respect extraordinary, but deriving its principal consideration from being the source of so noble a river. Indeed, it was this circumstance alone that induced us to enter Switzerland by the way of Suabia.

I am, dear Sir,

very affectionately yours,

WILLIAM COXE.

L E T T E R 2.

Arrival in Switzerland — Schaffhausen — Fall of the Rhine.

Schaffhausen July 22.

I FEEL great delight in breathing the air of liberty: every person here has apparently the mien of content and satisfaction. The cleanliness of the houses, and of the people, is peculiarly striking; and I can trace in all their manners, behaviour, and dress, some strong outlines, which distinguish this happy people from the neighbouring nations. Perhaps it may be prejudice and unreasonable partiality; but I am the more pleased, because their first appearance reminds me of my own countrymen, and I could almost think, for a moment, that I am in England ¹.

¹ On again entering Schaffhausen, the 18th of July, 1786, I was not so much struck with its neatness as in 1776. The reason

Schaffhausen, a tolerably well-built town, situated upon the northern shore of the Rhine, is the capital of the canton, and owes its origin to the interruption of the navigation of that river by the cataract at Lauffen; huts being at first constructed for the convenience of unloading the merchandize from the boats, by degrees increased to a large town. Schaffhausen was formerly an imperial city, and governed by an aristocracy: it was mortgaged in 1330, by the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, to the Dukes of Austria, and was released from its dependency by the Emperor Sigismund, when Frederic Duke of Austria was put under the ban of the empire. In 1501, it was admitted a member of the Helvetic confederacy; and is the twelfth canton in rank. Of all the cantons, it is the least in size, being only five leagues in length and three in breadth: its population is supposed to amount to thirty thousand souls; of which, the capital contains about six thousand.

The whole number of citizens or burgeses (in whom the supreme power ultimately resides) is about sixteen hundred. They are divided into twelve tribes²: and from these are elected eighty-five members, who form the great and little council³.

is obvious. In my former expedition I emerged from the wilds of Suabia, on the latter occasion I had just quitted the cultivated parts of Bavaria.

² Ten of these tribes consist of commoners, one of nobles, and one of a mixture of both. There are, however, no particular privileges attached to the members of these two latter tribes.

RAMOND.

³ The members of both these councils are elected every year, the day after whitsuntide; when a printed list is delivered to every citizen of the members of his tribe, on this he marks with red chalk the names of those to whom he gives his vote;

To these two councils combined, the administration of affairs is committed: the senate, or little council of twenty-five, being intrusted with the executive power⁴; and the great council, comprising the senate, finally deciding all appeals, and regulating the more important concerns of government.

The revenues of the state are not very considerable, as will appear from the salary of the burgomaster, or chief of the republic; which barely amounts to *L. 150 per ann.* The reformation was introduced in 1529: the clergy are paid by the state, but their income is scarcely sufficient for their maintenance; the best living being only about *L. 100*, and the worst *L. 40 per ann.* The professors of literature also, who are taken from the clergy, are paid by government; and a school is

these lists being collected and examined, the report is made of the majority of voices. The burgomaster who presides over the great council, but without the right of giving a vote, is elected on whitsunday by the members of the old council. R.

⁴ This little council takes cognizance of all civil causes, and receives appeals from the sentences of the bailiffs. Capital offences are only inquirable and presentable here, and must be certified to the great council, who is alone empowered to inflict punishments. Both these councils meet but in cases of necessity, and, law suits not being very common, seldom more than once a week. When in 1776 the council held fourscore sessions about the concerns of the republic with the French monarchy, every body wondered at it, as a thing unheard of.

The law-proceedings are very simple here; the parties are obliged to plead their causes themselves without being allowed to commit their reasons to paper, were it but to assist the memory; such as are not used, or unable to talk in public may claim the advice and assistance of a counsellor; this, however, must be done without the least preparation and in the court. The costs of any law suit, be its object ever so great, never exceed the sum of six shillings. RAMOND.

supported at the public expense. Sumptuary laws are in force here, as well as in most parts of Switzerland; and no dancing is allowed, except upon particular occasions. The principal article of exportation is wine; of which a large quantity is made, the country abounding in vineyards: and as the canton furnishes but little corn, it is procured from Suabia in exchange for wine. In the town there are a few manufactures of linen, cotton, and silk.

It will perhaps give you some idea of the security of the Swiss republics, when I inform you, that Schaffhausen, although a frontier town, has no garrison; and that the fortifications are but weak. The citizens mount guard by turns; and the people of the canton being divided into regular companies of militia, which are exercised yearly, are always prepared to act in defence of their country. This canton has some troops in France, Sardinia, and Holland; the only foreign services into which the subjects of the Protestant cantons enlist⁵.

Before I take leave of this town, I must not omit mentioning the bridge over the Rhine; justly admired for the singularity of its architecture. The river is extremely rapid, and had already destroyed several stone bridges of the strongest construction; when a carpenter of Appenzel offered to throw a wooden bridge, of a single arch, across the river, which is near four hundred feet wide. The magistrates, however, required that it should consist of

⁵ As young fellows flock continually hither from the neighbouring country of Suabia, the republic is at no great pains to find recruits at a cheap rate for the Sardinian service: reserving the natives of the canton for the Hollanders, who do not admit foreigners into their Swiss regiments. RAMOND.

two arches, and that he should for that purpose employ the middle pier of the old bridge. Accordingly, the architect was obliged to obey; but he has contrived to leave it a matter of doubt, whether the bridge is supported by the middle pier; and whether it would not have been equally as safe if formed solely of one arch.

It is a wooden bridge, of which the sides and top are covered, and is what the Germans call a *hængewerk*, or hanging bridge; the road, which is almost level, is not carried, as usual, over the top of the arch; but, if I may use the expression, is let into the middle of it, and there suspended. The pier is not in a right line with the buttresses; as it forms with them a very obtuse angle pointing down the stream, being eight feet out of the rectilinear direction. The distance of this middle pier from the shore that lies towards the town, is a hundred and seventy-two feet, and from the other side, a hundred and ninety-three, in all, three hundred and sixty-four feet; making in appearance two arches of a surprising width, and forming a beautiful perspective when viewed at some distance. A man of the slightest weight feels it almost tremble under him; yet waggons heavily laden pass over without danger. It has been compared to a tight rope, which trembles when struck, but still preserves its firm and equal tension. I went under this bridge, in order to examine its mechanism; and could not avoid being highly pleased with the simplicity of the architecture: I was not capable of determining whether it rests upon the middle pier, but many judges agree that it does not.

On considering the greatness of the plan, and the boldness of the construction, it is matter of

astonishment that the architect was originally a carpenter, without the least tincture of literature, totally ignorant of mathematics, and not versed in the theory of mechanics. The name of this extraordinary man was Ulric Grubenman, a native of Tussen, a small village in the canton of Appenzel. Possessed of uncommon natural abilities, and a surprising turn for the practical part of mechanics, he raised himself to great eminence in his profession; and may justly be considered as one of the most ingenious architects of the present century. This bridge was finished in less than three years, and cost ninety thousand florins ⁶.

⁶ About L. 8000 sterling. — Mr. Andreae, in his *Letters upon Switzerland*, has given two engravings of this bridge, to which he has added a very accurate description of its mechanical construction, communicated by Mr. Jetzler of Schaffhausen. In this description he represents it as consisting of two arches, and resting upon the middle pier. Several persons well skilled in architecture, maintained a contrary opinion; and in the former editions I was induced to adopt it, from the following reasons. The architect himself constantly maintained, that the bridge was not supported by the pier; his nephew, who was employed in its construction, confirmed the same assertion; and as, at first, it did not even touch the pier, it must therefore, at that time, have been considered as forming but one arch. I must, however, candidly own, that in my subsequent visits to Schaffhausen in 1785 and 1786, I had reason to change my opinion. At those periods the bridge was supported on piles, in order to undergo a thorough repair. Mr. Spengler, a native of the town, and lately returned from Russia, where he had passed many years in the capacity of an architect, fortunately discovered, that much ill-seasoned wood having been employed in its construction, many of the timbers were absolutely decayed; and that one side had greatly swerved from its original direction. This ingenious artist, after having expatiated on the simplicity and boldness of the design, informed me, that the bridge undoubtedly consists of two arches; and that although Grubenman, of whose

This morning we rode about a league, to the Fall of the Rhine at Lauffen. Our route lay over the hills which form the banks of the river: the environs are picturesque and agreeable; the river beautifully winding through the vale. Upon our arrival at Lauffen, a small village in the canton of Zurich, we dismounted; and advancing to the edge of the precipice which overhangs the Rhine, we looked down perpendicularly upon the cataract, and saw the river tumbling over the sides of the rock with amazing violence and precipitation. From hence we descended till we were somewhat below the upper bed of the river, and stood close to the fall; so that I could almost have touched it with my hand. A scaffolding is erected in the very spray of this tremendous cataract, and upon the most sublime point of view: — the sea of foam rushing down — the continual cloud of spray scattered to a great distance, and to a considerable height — in short, the magnificence of the whole scenery far surpassed my most sanguine expectations, and exceeds all description ⁷. Within about an

abilities he spoke with deserved encomium, affected to place the timbers in such a manner as to resemble but one arch, and always asserted that it was not supported by the pier; yet that the whole fabric would undoubtedly have fallen, if that pier had been taken away. He obligingly showed me his plan for repairing the bridge, and for strengthening it by means of additional timbers, in order to render it able to support its own weight, when the piles should be removed.

Vid. *Briefe aus der Schweiz nach Hannover geschrieben*. Zurich, 1776.

⁷ Mr. Lenz, a fanciful, but unfortunate young German author, who went down with me on the scaffolding, was so struck at this tremendous sight, that he fell on his knees, and cried out, *voilà un enfer d'eau!* (this is a hell of water;) nor could the wind which drove continually the spray into our faces, for some time rouse him from his rapture. RAMOND.

hundred feet of the scaffolding, two crags rise in the middle of the fall: the nearest is perforated by the continual action of the river; and the water forces itself through in an oblique direction, with inexpressible fury, and an hollow sound. After having contemplated the awful sublimity of this wonderful landscape, we descended; and crossed the river, which was extremely agitated.

Hitherto I had only viewed the cataract obliquely; but here it opened by degrees, and displayed another picture, which I enjoyed at my leisure, as I sat down upon the opposite bank. The most striking objects were, the castle of Lauffen, erected upon the very edge of the precipice, and projecting over the river; near it, a church and some cottages; a clump of cottages close to the Fall; in the back ground, rocks, planted with vines, or tufted with hanging woods; a beautiful little hamlet upon the summit, skirted with trees; the great body of water, that seemed to rush out from the bottom of the rocks; the two crags abovementioned boldly advancing their heads in the midst of the fall, and in the very point of its steepest descent, their tops sprinkled with shrubs, and dividing the cataract into three principal branches. The color of the Rhine is extremely beautiful, being of a clear sea-green; and I could not but remark the fine effect of the tints, when blended with the white foam in its descent. There is a pleasing view from an iron foundery close to the river, which is dammed up, in order to prevent its carrying away the works and neighbouring cottages: by means of this dam a small portion of the river is diverted; turns a mill, and forms a little silver current, gliding down the bare rock, and

detached from the main cataract. Below the fall the river widens considerably into a more ample basin; at the fall, the breadth seemed to be about three hundred feet. As to its perpendicular height, travellers differ: those who are given to exaggeration reckon it a hundred feet; but I should imagine about fifty or sixty feet will be nearer the truth. I stood for some time upon the brink of the cataract; beheld with admiration; and listened in silence; then crossed the river; remounted my horse; and returned to Schaffhausen.

Some writers have asserted that the Rhine precipitates itself in one sheet of water; and, as I before observed, from a perpendicular height of a hundred feet. In former ages this account might be agreeable to fact⁸; as it is probable that the space between the two banks was once a level rock, and considerably higher; that the river has insensibly undermined those parts, on which it broke with the utmost violence: for, within the memory of several inhabitants of this town, a large rock has given way, that has greatly altered the view. Indeed I am convinced that the perpendicular height of the fall is diminished every year, by the continual friction of so large and rapid a body of water; and have no doubt but that the two crags, which now rise in the midst of the river, will in time be undermined and carried away. The Rhine, for some way before the fall, even near the bridge, dashes upon a rocky bottom, and renders the navigation impossible for any kind of vessel.

I am, &c.

⁸ This fall must needs appear higher or lower at different seasons. During the melting of the snows it is probably at a

L E T T E R 3.

Isle of Reichenau—Constance—Genevan Establishment—Isle of Meinau—Lake of Constance.

Constance, July 24.

YESTERDAY morning we quitted Schaffhausen, and crossed the Rhine at Dieffenhoffen, a small town in Thurgau; a country dependent upon the eight ancient cantons: from thence to Stein the road lay by the side of that river. Stein is an independent town under the protection of Zurich, but governed by its own laws and magistrates. At this place we took a boat to carry us to Constance. A little above the town of Stein the river widens considerably, and forms the inferior lake of Constance, or the *Zeller See*; which is divided into two branches: from Stein to Constance is about sixteen miles, and from the latter to Zell, its greatest breadth, about ten.

A fine breeze soon carried us to the island of Reichenau⁹, which belongs to the Bishop of

height Mr. Coxe pretends to be exaggerated and fancies to be that of times past, which, as I have been assured, was never less than eighty feet. No stranger will ever make a just estimate of it at first sight. I observed, and by the sequel it will appear that Mr. Coxe made the same observation; that people unused to see high mountains are little able to measure objects far exceeding all they have yet seen, and which they have no standard to compare with. Travellers, who visit this country for the first time, instead of exaggerating are apt to diminish heights and distances, until custom, by supplying larger objects of comparison, teaches them to extend their ideas. R.

⁹ The isle of Reichenau lies in the Zellersee, at the conflux of its two branches, and facing the city of Constance. RAM.

Constance: it is about three miles long, and one broad; contains about sixteen hundred inhabitants, all Catholics; three parishes; one village; and a rich abbey of Benedictines, of which the bishop of Constance is abbot. The superior was exceedingly civil, and showed us all the relics and curiosities of the convent: among the latter was a carious tooth of Charles Le Gros. That monarch, who was emperor and king of France, and who possessed dominions as extensive as those of Charlemagne, lived to want the common necessaries of life, and to depend for his subsistence upon the charity of an archbishop of Mentz. He was publicly deposed in 887, at a meeting of the principal French, German, and Italian barons, whom he himself had summoned: after having languished a year, in extreme want and misery, he died at a small village near Mentz, in Germany, and his remains were conveyed to this convent. The next remarkable curiosity, was an emerald, as it is called, of an extraordinary size, which, according to the annals of the convent, was a present from Charlemagne. Take its dimensions, and then judge whether it can be an emerald: it has four unequal sides; the longest of which is near two feet, and the broadest about nine inches; it is one inch thick, and weighs about twenty-nine pounds. The superior valued it at L. 4500; but if it is, as I conjecture, nothing more than a transparent green *spath fluor*, its value will be reduced to a few shillings. Upon our return to the inn, where we dined, we found a present from the superior, more valuable than all the relics and curiosities of his convent; two bottles of excellent wine, the growth of the island, which is almost a continued vineyard.

In the evening we arrived at Constance; the situation of which upon the Rhine, between the two lakes, is most delightful. I was much affected with the solitary appearance of a town once so flourishing in commerce, and so celebrated in the annals of history. A dead stillness reigns throughout; grass grows in the principal streets; in a word, it wears the melancholy aspect of being almost totally deserted; and scarcely contains three thousand inhabitants. This city has endured a sad reverse of fortune: it was formerly in alliance with Zurich and Basle; and, supported by their assistance, had expelled the bishop, and embraced the reformation. But the Protestant cantons being worsted in 1351; and the league of Smalcalde, of which Constance was a member, being defeated by Charles V. the town was obliged to submit to the emperor, and to re-admit the Catholic religion. From this period it lost its independence; and being neglected by the house of Austria, fell by degrees into its present almost annihilated state; exhibiting to some of the neighbouring Swiss cantons, an instructive contrast, which must sensibly endear to them their own invaluable happiness, in the commerce and liberties which they enjoy.

We paid a visit to the chamber where the council of Constance was held in 1415, and had the honor of sitting in the two chairs, in which sat pope John XXIII.¹ and the emperor Sigismund; if any honor can be derived from a turbulent ecclesiastic, and a perjured sovereign. It was by a sentence of this council, that the celebrated reformer John Hufs (having embraced the doctrines of our Wickliffe, and trusting to the

¹ He was deposed in this council.

protection of the emperor, who violated his word) was burnt as an heretic. The house is still shown where he was seized, and upon which is fixed his head, carved in stone, but now almost defaced; with an inscription under it in German. Jerome of Prague, his disciple, had the weakness to recant before the same council; but this weakness was amply compensated by the greatness of soul with which he again retracted this recantation, and by the calm and intrepid magnanimity which he displayed in his last moments at the stake. From the top of the cathedral we had a superb view of the town, and of the two lakes; with the rugged Alps of Tyrol and Appenzel, their tops covered with perpetual snow.

Constance may again become a commercial town, through the permission granted by the emperor, to the emigrants from Geneva, of settling and carrying on their trade and manufactures, with very considerable privileges. Messrs. Roman and Meilly, watchmakers of Geneva, were the first persons, whom the troubles of their native republic drove to Constance. They received from the emperor the following immunities for themselves and countrymen.

The right of purchasing or building houses; free exercise of religion, entirely independent of the Catholic clergy; the power of erecting a tribunal for the purpose of deciding all affairs relative to their manufactures and commerce; exemption from serving in the militia and quartering soldiers; from all contributions during the space of twenty years; from duties on their tools and utensils; and the standard of the gold and silver employed in their manufactures to be invariably fixed. These

favorable terms, signed on the 30th of June, 1785, attracted many settlers to Constance; and in my second visit to this place, on the 25th of October, 1787, the new colony of Genevans consisted of seventy families, comprising three hundred and fifty persons; among these were fifty-four watchmakers, who had introduced the different branches of manufacture which belong to their trade. Four hundred watches were already finished, and above fourteen hundred more were preparing.

The emperor has also granted to Mr. Macaire the convent of Dominicans lately secularized, towards establishing a manufacture of printed linens and cottons. The refectory is appropriated for the chapel of the new colony.

I did not omit visiting a small dungeon, about eight feet long, six broad, and seven high, in which John Huss was confined, and wherein I observed the very stone to which he had been chained. I entered it however with very different sensations from those which I experienced in 1776, when this convent was the asylum of monkish superstition. It is now the seat of trade and industry: and it must suggest a pleasing reflection to a philosophic mind, that a successor of Sigismund, who violated his word, should have consigned to a reformed establishment that very convent in which the Bohemian divine was imprisoned, and from which he was triumphantly led to the stake; and that the most enlarged principles of toleration should be manifested in the same place, where persecution was inculcated by precept and example. It is the triumph of reason and religion over bigotry and intolerance.

I am just returned from a pleasant expedition to the small island of Meinau, in a bay of the superior lake: this island, about a mile in circumference, belongs to the knights of the Teutonic order. The bailiff showed us the house of the commander, which is prettily situated, and has a fine prospect of the lake, but contains nothing remarkable but the cellars, which are well stocked with wine; an article from which the chief revenue of the commandery arises. Our good friend the bailiff was very free in offering it; and we, not to appear insensible of his civility, were constrained to taste several different sorts, which he successively presented, always praising the last as the oldest and most exquisite. The wine was indeed excellent, the glasses large, and a most formidable row of enormous casks still remained untasted; so that, after having duly extolled several specimens, we found it expedient to decline the farther solicitations of our generous host: for, had we performed the whole ceremony, we must have taken up our abode in the castle for the night.

July 25.

We set sail about two hours ago from Constance. This superior lake, or, as it is sometimes called, the *Boden See*, is about fifteen leagues in length and six in its greatest breadth: it is one of the great boundaries that separate Switzerland from Germany. The borders on each side consist of gently rising hills; on the left hand Suabia, and on the right Thurgau, with a variety of scattered towns, villages, and monasteries: the form of the lake inclines to an oval, and the water is of a greenish hue. I am now writing aboard the vessel; and have been for some time in vain attempting

to distinguish (what some travellers have affirmed to be discernable) the waters of the Rhine from those of the lake: though indeed I was before almost convinced of the impossibility. For the river in its course from the superior lake, being exactly of the same beautiful greenish color as the inferior lake into which it flows; it is evident that the one can never be distinguished from the other. Probably, upon its first entrance into the superior lake it is troubled, and consequently, for some way, its current may easily be traced: but it purifies by degrees, and becomes an indistinct part of the great body of water.

This lake, like all the other lakes of Switzerland, is considerably deeper in summer than in winter; a circumstance owing to the first melting of the snow from the neighbouring mountains: it abounds in fish of various sorts. Yesterday evening, in our expedition to Meinau, there was scarcely a breeze stirring, and the lake was as smooth as crystal: a brisk gale has now raised a fine curl upon the surface; and the surrounding landscape forms an assemblage of the most beautiful objects. In short, the several views which present themselves are so truly enchanting, as to make me regret every moment that my eyes are called off from the delightful scenes. You will not wonder, therefore, if I am tempted to bid you adieu somewhat abruptly.

Yours, &c.

P. S. The following description of the great trout, which frequents all the Swiss lakes, but more particularly abounds in the lake of Constance, was communicated by Thomas Pennant, Esq.

This species of trout is called in this neighbourhood *Illanke*, and by Linnæus, *Salmo Lacustris*. The head is conical, and larger in proportion than that of a salmon. The dorsal fin has twelve rays; pectoral, fourteen; ventral and anal, twelve each. The under jaw, in full-grown fish, ends in a blunt hook. The color, as low as the lateral line, of a deep blue, brightening as it approaches the line; beneath that, of a silvery white; all the upper part is spotted irregularly with black. This kind grows to the weight of forty or forty-five pounds.

These fishes quit the deeps of the lake in April, and go up the Rhine to deposit their spawn. The inhabitants of the shores form weirs across the river, in which they take them in their passage. They are also caught in nets. The fishery lasts from May to September; the fishermen avoid taking any on the return, as they are then very lean and quite exhausted. In spring and summer their flesh is of a fine red, and very delicate; but after they have spawned, it turns white and becomes very indifferent. They feed on fish, worms, and insects; and are particularly destructive to the graylings. Their great enemy is the Pike, which will attack an *Illanke* four times as large as itself. For a further account, the reader may consult the elegant *Ichthyology* by Mr. Bloch, vol. iii. p. 155, who is the first naturalist that has given a satisfactory account of this gigantic species.

LETTER 4.

St. Gallen — Canton of Appenzel.

July 26.

I WRITE to you from the midst of the Alps, under the shade of a grove of beeches, while a clear stream of water, flowing at my feet, forms a natural cascade down the rock. I have just made a hearty meal upon some bread and cheese; which I found to be a most delicious repast, after walking six miles over the mountains of Appenzel.

We this day quitted St. Gallen, and walked to Appenzel. The country is singularly wild and romantic; consisting of a continued series of hills and dales, vallies and mountains, the tops of which are crowned with most luxuriant pastures. I could not have conceived it possible, without having been an eye-witness, that any district within the same compass could have exhibited so numerous a population; the hills and vales being thickly strewn with hamlets, scattered at a small distance from each other; and exactly placed in the very spots which a man of taste would have chosen. The picturesque mountains, the forests, the currents which we crossed, over bridges resembling those I have observed in some of the best landscapes, added to the beauty of the scenes, and diversified every step with the most pleasing objects. After having reposed for a short time in this delightful spot, I cannot employ myself more to my satisfaction than by continuing my journal.

In my last letter I took my leave of you upon the lake of Constance: we landed at Roshach, a small burgh in the dominions of the abbot of St. Gallen, agreeably situated in the midst of a bay at the edge of the lake, and at the bottom of a rising hill, richly covered with wood and pastures. From Roshach we went to St. Gallen, the whole territory whereof does not exceed a mile and a half in circumference; and including the town contains near eight thousand inhabitants. There every thing was alive; all persons wore the appearance of industry and activity; exhibiting a striking opposition to Constance, which we had just quitted.

The abbot and town of St. Gallen are both allies of the Swiss cantons, and each enjoys the privilege of sending deputies to the general diet. The abbot of St. Gallen is titular prince of the German empire, and is chosen by the seventy-two Benedictines, who compose this chapter. He formerly possessed the sovereignty of the town; but the inhabitants shook off his authority, and became independent: and the various disputes which, since that period, have arisen between the two rival parties, have been compromised by the interposition of the Swiss cantons. The town is entirely Protestant, and its government aristo-democratical: the subjects of the abbot (whose territory is very extensive) are mostly Catholics. It is remarkable, that the abbey in which the prince resides, is situated close to the town, and in the midst of its territory; as the latter is also entirely surrounded by the possessions of the prince.

The town owes its flourishing state to the

uncommon industry of the inhabitants, and to a very extensive commerce, arising chiefly from its manufactures of linen, muslin, and embroidery. In a place so entirely commercial, I was astonished to find the arts and sciences cultivated, and literature in the highest esteem. In the library there are thirteen volumes in folio, containing manuscript letters of the first German and Swiss reformers. Luther ends a letter to Melancthon as follows:

Pestis eram vivus, moriens ero mors tua, Papa.

These letters would probably throw much light on the history of the reformation.

The library belonging to the abbey is very numerous and well arranged; and, among a number of monkish manuscripts, contains several of the classic writers, which engaged my chief attention. To this library we owe Petronius Arbiter, Silius Italicus, Valerius Flaccus, and Quintilian, copies of which were found in 1413: it was formerly very rich in curious manuscripts; but several being borrowed, during the council of Constance, by the cardinals and bishops, were never returned.

The transition from the abbot of St. Gallen to the canton of Appenzel will not appear abrupt, as the latter once belonged to the former: the inhabitants, however, being loaded with exorbitant and oppressive taxes, revolted in 1400; and maintained their independence with the desperate courage of a spirited people, who fight for their liberties. In 1452 they entered into a perpetual alliance with some of the neighbouring Swiss republics; and in 1513 were admitted into the Helvetic confederacy: they hold the last rank among the thirteen cantons.

Before the reformation the whole canton was under one government; but since that period, part of the inhabitants having embraced the Protestant religion, and the other part continuing Catholics, violent disputes were kindled between them; which, after much contest, were at length compromised. By an agreement in 1597, the canton was divided into two portions; *Rhode Exterior*, and *Rhode Interior*: it was stipulated, that the former should be appropriated to the Protestants, and the latter to the Catholics. Accordingly the two parties finally separated, and formed two republics: their government, police, and finances, being totally independent of each other. Each district sends a deputy to the general diet: the whole canton, however, has but one vote, and loses its suffrage if the two parties are not unanimous. In both divisions the sovereign power is vested in the people at large; every male, who is past sixteen, having a vote in their general assembly, held yearly for the creation of their magistrates and the purposes of legislation: and each voter is obliged to appear armed on that particular occasion.² The Landamman is the first magistrate: in each district there are two, who administer the office alternately, and are confirmed yearly. They have each a council, which possesses jurisdiction in civil and criminal causes, has the care of the police, the management of the finances, and the general administration of affairs. The Landamman regent presides; and the other, during the year in which he is out of office, is banneret or chief of the militia.

² Before the general assembly the two *Rhodes* hold separate meetings; that of the Catholics on the last Sunday in April, new style; and that of the Protestants on the last Sunday in April, old style. RAMOND.

The *Rhode Exterior* is much larger, and more peopled in proportion, than the *Interior*; and the Protestants are in general more commercial and industrious than the Catholics.³ — The former are supposed to amount to thirty-seven thousand; the latter to twelve thousand: an extraordinary number in so small a canton, entirely mountainous, and of which a great part consists of barren and inaccessible rocks. But the industry of the inhabitants amply compensates for any disadvantages of soil: for, the people are frugal and laborious; their property is secured; and they are exempted from all burdensome and arbitrary taxes. These circumstances; joined to the right of partaking of the legislation, and of electing their magistrates, inspire them with such animated sentiments of their own importance and independence, as excite the most active and vigorous industry: and those necessaries, to which this industry is not sufficient, are abundantly supplied by their neighbours, in exchange for manufactures and other articles of domestic commerce. The chief part of the habitable country consists of rich pastures; and of course their principal exports are cattle and hides, together with cheese and butter. Their manufactures are coarse callicots and muslins in great quantities, which are entirely made in the houses of the inhabitants. The cotton is spun with the common wheel. The web is bleached at home; and afterwards sent to be

³ The exterior rhode is divided into nineteen communities or churches. The interior rhode is subdivided into six communities or four parishes and two filials. It is not the difference of religion which causes this disparity in the relative population. The catholic rhode is of small extent, very mountainous, and rather barren. All its inhabitants are herdsmen, although pasturage be very scanty. Rocks produce nothing and feed nothing. R.

printed in the neighbourhood of Neuchatel. The greatest bleachery I saw in the Alps was near Appenzel, which extended over three or four acres of ground. Part of the river Sitler is diverted to turn the mill, which is of the simplest construction. A large wheel on the outside works a long cylinder within; on which are fixed a number of cogs to raise the hammers which beat the webs. In the same place are the boilers and other conveniences for the business.

The only mills for spinning the cottons by water, which I saw in Switzerland, were near Neuchatel and Geneva; but greatly inferior in size and ingenuity of machinery to those of England.

The flourishing state of the cotton manufactory has rendered many persons in the Protestant districts easy in their circumstances, and even wealthy; if wealth is to be estimated from the general state of the natives, and not from the comparative view of distant and greater opulence in large commercial cities. The villages of Trogen and Undevil announce, by their superior neatness, the well-being of their inhabitants.

This canton contains no enclosed towns, but only two or three open burghs, of which Appenzel is the largest in the Catholic, Trogen, Undevil, and Herisau, in the Protestant district, and a few villages: indeed the whole country, except amongst the barren rocks, is almost a continued village, being thickly covered with excellent cottages. Each cottage has its little territory, or a field or two of fine pasture ground, which are frequently skirted with trees. The mountains are for the most part beautifully wooded; and the canton is supplied with water in such exuberance, that we could

hardly walk two hundred paces without seeing a spring bubble from the ground, or a torrent rush down the sides of a rock.

In our way to Appenzel, we entered several houses, which are all built of wood; neatness and convenience being the principal object of the owners: such a remarkable cleanliness prevailed throughout, as afforded a most striking proof of the general attention which the people pay to that essential article. A continued chain of these cultivated mountains, richly clothed with wood, and thickly studded with hamlets, which appear to have been placed by the genius of taste in the very spots where they would form the most striking effect, exhibit a series of landscapes inexpressibly pleasing: it seemed as if they belonged to independent clans; independent but social, uniting for the great purposes of legislation, and for the general preservation of their liberties.

Among the chief part of the inhabitants, the original simplicity of the pastoral life is still preserved; and I saw several venerable figures with long beards, that resembled the pictures of the ancient patriarchs⁴. The natives of this canton, in common with the inhabitants of democracies, possess a natural frankness, and peculiar tone of equality, which arise from a consciousness of their own independence. They also display a fund of original humor, and are remarkable for great quickness of repartee, and rude sallies of wit, which render their conversation extremely agreeable and interesting.

In our way to Appenzel we passed through Tussen, the birth-place of Ulric Grubenman, whom

⁴ At the age of sixty a Swiss may let his beard grow; he is then exempted from military duty and the charges of the state. R.

I mentioned in a former letter ⁵: he has been dead some years: but his abilities and his skill in practical architecture are, if I may use the expression, hereditary in his family. We inquired for one of the same name, who was either his brother or his nephew, whom we found at the alehouse; his usual place of resort when he has no particular employment. He is a heavy, coarse-looking man, dressed like a common peasant; has a quick and penetrating eye, and a surprising readiness of conversation. We told him that we were Englishmen, who were making the tour of Switzerland; and that we could not pass through Tuffen without desiring to see a man who was so much celebrated for his skill in architecture. He struck his breast, and replied in German, "Here you see but a boor." Upon our talking with him about the bridge of Schaffhausen, in the building of which he was employed, he assured us, that it does not rest upon the middle pier, but is in reality a single arch ⁶. Near Appenzel we observed an old man with venerable white hair hanging over his shoulders,

⁵ See p. 8.

⁶ *Grubenman's* assertions had need to be supported by a geometrical demonstration. It is probable, that his uncle *Ulric*, when building the bridge, being loth to make use of a pier less sure than his work, contrived to render it useless; but I do not think the means he employed adequate to the purpose; for resting only on the oblique resistance and coherence of some traverses, it will not hinder the whole building from warping, whenever the point of the obtuse angle it forms shall give way; the pressure of both parts of the bridge, expressed by a line perpendicular to the shore, not then falling on the buttments, the bridge must needs crack on the side, and sink, in spite of the railing of traverses which *Grubenman* put on the footway, in order to contain all its parts in their assemblage. RAMOND.

who looked like a substantial farmer: he inquired with a tone of authority, but with perfect civility, who we were; and upon our asking the same question respecting himself, of our guide, we were informed, that he was the *Landamman*, or chief of the republic. Happy people, the nature of whose country, and the constitution of whose government both equally oppose the strongest barriers against the introduction of luxury!

Doctor Girtanner, of St. Gallen, found in great abundance, on the top of the Appenzel mountains, the Whitlow-grass, *Draba Pyrenaica* of Linnæus, not mentioned by Haller in his catalogue of the Swiss plants.

Yours, &c.

Appenzel, July 27.

Observations on the canton of Appenzell.

This country produces a great deal of saltpetre which the inhabitants used to sell to the French and the Germans, when they were at war together: a trade which under proper regulations might have become very advantageous. Their method of making it is very simple. The stables of their cattle, being mostly built on the declivity of the mountains, are raised on one side about two or three feet above the ground, and the flooring at each corner is supported by a strong post, so that the space between it and the ground remains fully exposed to the air. Within this space they dig a pit as large as the building, about three feet deep: in the room of the black and fat, or quite clayey soil which is dug out of it, they put a light sandy earth, which they take care to compress a little. This earth, being very porous, imbibes the urine of the cattle, quickens the evaporation of the moist particles, and favors the formation of saltpetre to which the contact of the air is absolutely necessary. In two or three years there is saltpetre

enough formed; the pit is then emptied, and when the earth has been elixivated in the common way, it is dried in the air and put back into the pit. It has been observed that the more this earth is used the fitter it becomes for the crytallization of saltpetre; it may then be elixivated sooner, and made to yield gradually so great a quantity, that about a thousand pound weight of it may be extracted yearly from an habitation tolerably well peopled. The quantity of this produce depends mostly on the exposure of the buildings; a northern is the best, as a brisk air accelerates the evaporation of the salt, which would be impeded by the heat of the sun so apt to volatilize some of its constituent parts.

The saltpetre trade is not peculiar to the canton of *Appenzell*; in that of *Glaris* a considerable quantity of it is gathered annually; but the inhabitants of this latter canton, as industrious as their neighbours, being less attached to their country, neglect these resources of pastoral life. This difference of character between these two people is hardly sensible, and would merit little consideration if it did not help to discriminate them. The inhabitants of the six democratical, or what are here called the smaller cantons, are all distinguished by some peculiarities. This distinction is the more surprising as these six cantons are but inconsiderable parts of a small portion of country, inhabited by men united by the same interests, brought up in the same way, and, if I may be allowed the expression, characterized by the same manners. The character of the inhabitants of *Switz* is strongly marked with haughtiness or rather national pride. The peasants of *Uri* and *Zug* are the rudest and most intractable of the whole league; the bloody scenes at their general assemblies bespeak the turbulence of the latter, and the former who have ever been looked upon as the frankest and coolest of the whole republic, begin to lose, by a continual intercourse with the Italians, somewhat of their frankness, without improving visibly in their manners. Between these three cantons lies another, very unlike those that surround it, the canton of *Underwalden*, whose mountains

are inhabited by a race of men, robust and heavy, but so mild and so friendly, that a stranger who does not shock their simplicity by ostentatiousness, may be assured to meet with a kind reception and a gratuitous entertainment in every cottage. The inhabitants of *Glaris* are active, restless and industrious, without the least attachment to their native soil, from which it is impossible to tear the shepherds of *Appenzell*. These are cheerful and laborious, engaging by the gentleness of their manners, remarkable for and their ready humor. The citizens of *Schaffhausen* and *Zurich* pay these people annual visits: the famous *Gessner*, his friend *Fuesly*, *Breitinger*, *Lavater*, &c. have travelled and always travel with new delight in this interesting country. To these gentlemen I owe the following observation, which may serve to contrast the exclamation with which Mr. Coxe closes his letter. As in this country the cattle meet oftener and in greater numbers than men, it is through them chiefly, that luxury penetrates into the canton; a substantial peasant of *Appenzell*, whose whole wardrobe is not worth two guineas, will spend seven on a bell to hang at the neck of his favorite cow. RAMOND.

LETTER 5.

*Valley of the Rhine — The Lake and Town of
Wallenstadt.*

Salets, July 27.

WE are this moment arrived at the village of Salets; where we propose passing the night: while supper is preparing, I will continue my journal. We could procure but three horses at Appenzel, and as one of them was appropriated to the baggage, I preferred walking. After having traversed

a league in the canton, over a continued range of mountains, enriched with beautiful meadows, and dotted with cottages, I arrived at its boundary; here the scene suddenly changed into a wild forest of pines, without the least appearance of any habitation. The road is scarcely more than three feet broad; and is either paved with large uneven pieces of rock, or formed of thick flakes laid closely together: but as the ground is in many parts softer than in others, these flakes in some places sink deeper; and form a succession of uneven steps. The mountain by which we descended into the plain, is very steep; which circumstance; added to the unevenness of the flakes, makes the ascent and descent exceedingly difficult for horses. Those who are pleased with an uniform view, may continue in the plain; while others, who delight in the grand and the sublime, and are struck with the wantonness of wild, uncultivated nature, will prefer this road to the smoothest turnpike in Great Britain.

I walked slowly on, without envying my companions on horseback: for I could sit down upon an inviting spot, climb to the edge of a precipice, or trace a torrent by its sound. I descended at length into the *Rheinthal*, or Vally of the Rhine; the mountains of Tyrol, which yielded neither in height or in cragginess to those of Appenzel, rising before me. And here I found a remarkable difference: for although the ascending and descending was a work of some labor; yet the variety of the scenes had given me spirits, and I was not sensible of the least fatigue. But in the plain, notwithstanding the scenery was still beautiful and picturesque, I saw at once the whole way stretching before me,

and had no room for fresh expectations: I was not therefore displeased when I arrived at Oberried, after a walk of about twelve miles, my coat slung upon my shoulder like a peripatetic by profession. Here we procured a narrow cart; in which, the roads being rough and stony, you will readily believe we were not much at our ease. The evening however being fine, and the moon exceedingly bright, our journey was not altogether disagreeable; as it led us through a delightful country abounding in vines, fruit-trees, flax, and pasturage.

The Rheinthal is a bailliage belonging to Appenzel and the eight ancient cantons, which alternately appoint a bailiff. The people are of both religions, but the Protestants are the most numerous.

Wallenstadt, July 28.

We quitted Salets this morning, in the same cart in which we arrived; and it would have afforded matter of some speculation, to observe how we contrived to arrange ourselves, our servants, a large Newfoundland dog, and the baggage, in so narrow a compass: indeed we were so wedged in, that, after we had once fixed ourselves in our several places, it was almost impossible to stir. The day was sultry, and the sun powerful, the road bad, and the cart went barely at the rate of three miles an hour; but the country still continued so picturesque and mountainous; and our attention was so entirely engaged with the perpetual variety of objects it presented to our view, as to make us forget the inconveniences of our equipage, and the excessive heat of the weather. From Trivabach, a small village upon the Rhine, we walked to Sargans, the capital of a bailliage of the same name, belonging to the eight ancient cantons. Let

Let me here remark, that in Switzerland there are two sorts of bailliages: the one consisting of certain districts, into which all the aristocratical cantons are divided; and over these a particular officer, called a *bailiff*, is appointed by government to which he is accountable for his administration; the other sort are the territories that do not make part of the cantons, but are subject to two or more of them, who by turns appoint a bailiff⁶. This officer, when not restrained by the peculiar privilege of certain districts, has the care of the police, jurisdiction in civil and criminal causes with some limitations; and enjoys a stated revenue arising in different places from various duties and taxes. In case of exaction or mal-administration, an appeal always lies from the bailiff to the cantons, to which

⁶ In the aristocratical cantons the supreme power is lodged in the few citizens who inhabit the capital, all those that do not share in it being subjects. Thus there are in the cantons of *Berne, Basle, Lucerne, Friburgh, Soleure* no other freemen but those who compose the tribes of the different capitals; the inhabitants of the country although living under a mild government and enjoying several privileges, are not less subjects than those of a monarchy. The citizens who compose the state govern their subjects by certain officers, *bailiffs*, who are accountable for their administration to their constituents. The other sort of bailiwicks differs little from this; the aristocratical and democratical cantons exercise a joint sovereignty over certain conquered provinces, whose inhabitants being subjects to one or several cantons are governed by bailiffs invested with more or less power. The moral difference between the aristocratical and democratical bailiwicks is a striking proof of human folly; the inhabitants of the former are governed with the greatest moderation and tenderness, whilst those of the latter are ruled with a rod of iron. Strange that men who pride themselves in their independence and equality should degrade their subjects to the condition of slaves. R.

the bailliage belongs: and the place, the time, and the members who receive the appeal, are regulated with the utmost exactness. With respect to this of Sargans, and the others belonging to the eight ancient cantons conjointly; at the conclusion of the general diet held annually at Frauenfeld in Thurgau, the deputies of the cantons resolve themselves into a Syndicate, examine the accounts of the public revenues as delivered by the bailiffs of the respective districts, and receive and judge all appeals; in some cases finally; but in the more important causes an appeal lies from this assembly to the superior tribunal of each canton. The theory of this institution, has a plausible appearance of impartiality: but how far the practice accords with the theory, I cannot pretend to determine. Whether a bailiff, who is guilty of extortion, is easily brought to justice, or more easily screened? how far the members of the Syndicate are liable to influence, or open to corruption? how far the expense of appeals renders them in many cases impracticable to the poorer inhabitants? are questions which cannot be answered but by a person well informed concerning these courts of justice.

We arrived late at Wallenstadt, a town incorporated into the bailliage of Sargans, but enjoying several distinct privileges: it derives its existence from the passage of the merchandise transported from Germany through the Grisons to Italy. This communication occasions the frequent resort of Italian merchants; and that language is understood by many of the inhabitants. Our landlord speaks Italian, and has been very accurate in his answers to my questions relating to the number of inhabitants, the government of the town, its dependence

upon the bailiff, and its privileges. Nor is this a matter of wonder: for the innkeepers in Switzerland are mostly *burghers*, and are frequently members of the sovereign council; and, from the very nature of their governments, the Swifs in general are well informed of their particular constitutions. I have also held a long conversation with a native of Glaris, who has furnished me with much information in relation to that canton: which we purpose visiting to-morrow.

Wesen, July 29.

The lake of Wallenstadt, about twelve miles in length, and two in breadth, is entirely bounded by high mountains, except to the east and west. From this situation, a breeze generally blows from those two quarters, beginning at break of day, and continuing for some hours; then changes from west to east till sun-set: this breeze is very convenient for the transportation of the merchandise. Sometimes however a violent north-wind rushes down from the mountains, and renders the navigation dangerous. We were assured by the inhabitants, and by the watermen who rowed us from Wallenstadt to this place, that the breeze above-mentioned was generally constant: but we cannot attest it from our own experience; as we set out this morning about eight, and the wind was directly contrary the whole way, blowing from west to east. The weather, it is true, was heavy, overcast, and rainy, which might cause perhaps this occasional variation.

The scenery of the lake is uncommonly wild and picturesque, and affords a perpetual variety of beautiful and romantic scenes. On the side of

Glaris, the mountains which form its borders, are chiefly cultivated; enriched with wood or fine meadows; and studded with cottages, churches, and small villages; the Alps of Glaris rising behind, their tops covered with snow. On the other side, for the most part, the rocks are grotesque, craggy, inaccessible, and perpendicular: but here and there a few cultivated necks of land are formed at the very edge of the lake, and at the bottom of these very rocks; exhibiting a beautiful contrast to the barrenness above and around them. Numberless waterfalls, occasioned by the melting of the snows, fall down the sides of the mountains from a very considerable height, and with an almost inconceivable variety; some of them seeming to glide gently in circular directions; others forming vast torrents, and rushing into the lake with noise and violence: all of them changing their form and their position as we approached or receded from them. The lake is exceedingly clear, deep, and cold, and, as we were informed, is never frozen.

There is nothing remarkable in this place; being a small village situated almost upon the point where the Mat issues from the lake of Wallenstadt: that little river is joined by the Linth, and both united fall, under the name of Limmat, into the lake of Zurich.

I am, &c.

Observations on the lake of Wallenstadt.

I had it as little in my power as Mr. Coxe to ascertain the regularity of the easterly and westerly breeze that blows on this lake; but I can easily conceive, that the air, when confined between two long ridges of high mountains, which

admit of a passage but at the opposite extremities, will, in whatever direction it be agitated, necessarily seek for a vent at either of them. Its periodical shifting is probably occasioned by the different aspects of the sun, whose course this breeze obeys, the alternate rarefaction of the opposite parts of the atmosphere which it visits at its rising and setting, and the state of the air when it is near its meridian; towards noon there generally reigns for one or two hours a dead calm on this lake, after which the wind changes.

A fierce northwind will sometimes disturb this order; the raging surges render then the lake very dangerous; the storm rushing furiously down from a prodigious height, strikes perpendicularly on the surface of the water, which, instead of rolling in broad waves is forced to rise and struggle against the tempest. The curling billows mount almost into the clouds and give to the lake the most dreadful appearance; in such a tempest it is very unsafe to sail upon it, between rocks accessible but at two places which the violence of the wind renders it impossible to approach.

Near *Wallenstadt* the river *Linth* enters into this lake, and, having flowed over a small tract of about four leagues, between two rows of hills, which seem to be the last steps of the frightful mountains of *Glaris* and the *Grisons*, discharges itself into that of *Zurich*. The plain watered by the river *Linth*, is low and dank, cut at right angles by the rising grounds that bound it, and resembles a great lake, which seems to have united formerly those of *Wallenstadt* and *Zurich*. The plausibility of this idea which recurred to me every time I crossed this lake induced me to consult a peasant of the neighbourhood; this man*, however, overturned my whole hypothesis, by telling me that these two lakes, instead of diminishing, as I fancied, were increasing; that his father had possessed, in the plain I saw, meadows which now were become impervious swamps; he showed me in the rushes

* He was an inhabitant of one of the villages that skirt the road from *Lachen* to *Glaris*.

pastures already half overflown, and destined to be in a few years covered by the waters of the lake of Zurich, which in that vicinage is already on a level with these grounds, and penetrates them far and wide to meet the lake of *Wallenstadt*. RAMOND.

LETTER 6.

The Canton of Glaris.

Glaris, July 29.

THE canton of Glaris was formerly subject to the abbess of the convent of Seckingen in Suabia⁷; the people however enjoyed very considerable privileges and a democratical form of government, under the administration of a mayor, appointed by the abbess, but chosen among the inhabitants. Towards the latter end of the thirteenth century, the emperor Rodolph I. obtained the exclusive administration of justice; and not long afterwards his son Albert, having purchased the mayoralty, which had gradually become hereditary, re-united in his person the whole civil and judicial authority. Accordingly that prince, and his immediate descendants the dukes of Austria, oppressed the people, and ruled over them with an absolute sway. In 1350, Schweitz, assisted by

⁷ The people pay her still a rent of about 30 shillings, which they repeatedly offered to redeem at a very considerable price, and whereof their delicacy would not allow them to free themselves by a bankruptcy, when they were in rebellion. Such a nice sense of honor is pretty common in Switzerland, and not unlike the dealings of a nation which is actually fighting for its freedom. RAMOND.

Zuric, Lucerne, Uri, and Underwalden, expelled the Austrians from the canton of Glaris, and re-established the democracy. Glaris then entered into a perpetual alliance with its deliverers, and was received into the Helvetic confederacy with some restrictions, which were not abolished until 1450. At that time it was the sixth canton, but is now the last in rank of the eight *ancient* cantons, as they are called: being so distinguished, because, from the accession of Zug and Berne in 1352, more than a century elapsed before a new member was admitted. These *ancient* cantons have also several privileges superior to the five others; the latter having submitted to some particular restrictions, upon their reception into the Helvetic league.

The people of Glaris enjoyed their liberties unmolested till 1388, when the Austrians made an irruption into the canton, with a force sufficient, as they arrogantly thought, totally to subdue it; pillaging the country, and massacring the inhabitants. It was then that three hundred and fifty troops of Glaris, assisted by thirty Switzers, resisted the whole strength of the Austrian army: the former were posted advantageously upon the mountains, and the latter, to the number of fifteen thousand, at a village called Næfels. In this situation the Austrians began the attack; but were soon compelled to retreat with great precipitation, by a shower of stones poured upon them from the heights: in this moment of confusion, the inhabitants rushed down upon the enemy with such redoubled fury, that they broke their ranks; and, after an immense slaughter, forced the remainder to retire from the canton. These surprising victories, gained by a handful of men

against an enemy so much superior in number (instances of which are by no means rare in the history of Switzerland) render the wonderful combats of Marathon and Plataea, when the Greeks repulsed the numerous hosts of the whole Persian empire, perfectly credible. The same love of independence, the same dread of slavery, and the same attachment to their country, animated the respective nations to the same deeds of heroism; and in both instances victory was followed by the same glorious consequences: for the Swiss, as well as the Greeks, owe the rise and preservation of their liberties to that magnanimous and determined valor, which prefers death to living under the servile domination of an arbitrary despot. The people still celebrate the anniversary of this victory, which ensured their independence: and I saw near the village of Næfels several stones, with no other inscription than 1388: an inscription which no more requires explanation, to an inhabitant of the canton, than the glorious era of 1688, to an Englishman.

In the sixteenth century, the reformation was introduced into this canton, but not exclusively: both religions are tolerated, and the two sects live together in the greatest harmony; an union the more remarkable, when we consider the fatal quarrels that have been kindled in Switzerland on account of religious tenets; and that in Appenzel the division between the two sects is distinctly marked by their inhabiting different districts, and living under separate governments. In several parts of this canton, the Protestants and Catholics successively perform service in the same church; and all the offices of state are amicably

administered by the two parties ⁸. During the present and preceding century, the Protestants have increased considerably in number ⁹; and their industry, in every branch of commerce, is greatly superior: an evident proof how much the tenets of the Roman Catholic church fetter the genius, and depress the powers of exertion.

The government is entirely democratical: every person at the age of sixteen has a vote in the *Landsgemeind*, or general assembly, which is annually held in an open plain. This assembly ratifies new laws, lays contributions, enters into alliances, declares war, and makes peace. The *Landamman* is the chief of the republic, and is chosen alternately from the two sects; with this difference, that the *Protestant* remains three years in office, the *Catholic* only two. The manner of election is as follows: five candidates chosen by the people draw lots for the charge. The other great officers of state, and the bailiffs, are taken also by lot from a certain number of candidates

⁸ This is one of the few instances of religious toleration in Switzerland; an aversion which their political ties have not yet been able to remove, alienates still the followers of the two religions. This aversion is visible in all circumstances, and influences these people very much in their manner of receiving strangers. As during my stay among the shepherds of the Alps I happened, by my way of travelling, to be frequently at their mercy, the necessity to gain their friendship taught me to flatter their passions. I distinguished two sorts of salutation, the use of which is not at all indifferent; the one being proper to the Catholics, the other to the Protestants; he who expects to meet with a hospitable reception in a cottage must be cautious not to confound them. RAMOND.

⁹ The number of the Protestants is about eight times greater than that of the Catholics. RAMOND.

proposed by the people. The executive power is vested in the council of regency, composed of forty-eight Protestants, and fifteen Catholics: each sect has its particular court of justice; and it is necessary, that in all law-suits between two persons of different religions, the person having the casting voice among the five or nine judges, who are to determine the cause, should be of the same religion as the defendant.

Cattle, cheese, and butter, constitute the principal commerce of the canton. The cattle are fed in summer upon the Alps: and it is computed, that ten thousand head of large cattle, and four thousand sheep, are pastured during that season upon the mountains belonging to the canton. The inhabitants also manufacture linen and muslins.

Among the exports a considerable article is slate; with which the canton abounds. The principal quarry is in the valley of Sernft, where large slates are dug up that serve for tables. These quarries, as I am informed by Mr. David Pennant, once furnished Great Britain with slates for writing, or accountants slates; but this trade is entirely lost. Of late they have been prepared from the great slate quarries in Caernarvonshire, the property of Lord Penryn; and with such success, as bids fair to extend this article of commerce over most part of Europe.

July 30.

I am just returned to Glaris, after having made an excursion towards the extremity of the canton: it is entirely enclosed by the alps, except towards the north; and there is no other entrance but through this opening, which lies between the lake of Wallenstadt and the mountains separating this

canton from that of Schweitz. Passengers indeed may in summer traverse these alps to the Grisons on one side, and to Ury on the other: but these paths are in winter absolutely impracticable¹. At the entrance above-mentioned, the canton reaches, from the banks of the Linth to the farthest extremity of its alps, about thirty miles; forming a valley, which becomes narrower as you advance, and is scarcely more than a musket-shot in breadth at the burgh of Glaris. It afterwards opens by degrees; and about a league from the last-mentioned burgh, is divided by the Freyberg mountains: at the point of this division the two rivers, Linth and Sernft, unite.

We continued through the largest of these valleys, which, though very narrow, is exceedingly populous. You have been at Matlock in Derbyshire, and I remember your admiration of its beautiful and romantic situation: the scenery of this valley is of the same cast, but infinitely more picturesque, more wild, more varied, and more sublime. The Linth is much broader and more rapid than the Derwent; and the hillocks of the Peak are mere mole-hills to the alps of Glaris. These stupendous chains of rocks are absolutely perpendicular, approach one another so near and are so high, that the sun may be said to set, even in summer, at four in the afternoon. On each side are numbers of those water-falls we so much admired during our passage over the lake of Walenstadt; one in particular, near the village of Ruti, foamed down the steep sides of a mountain,

¹ I went by one of these roads in my journey from *Altdorf* to *Glaris*. See my note at the end of this letter. RAMOND.

from the midst of a hanging grove of trees. I was so captivated with these enchanting scenes, that I could not help stopping every moment to admire them: and our guide, not conceiving it possible, that these delays could be owing to any other cause than the laziness of his horse, never failed to strike the poor beast; and continually awakened me out of my rapturous contemplations; and it was some time before I could make him comprehend, that I stopped by choice, and wished to continue my own pace. After having rode about ten miles, we quitted our horses and walked. Near Leugelbach, a considerable rivulet is formed by two streams bursting from the ground at the foot of a mountain, which after a few paces unite, and fall into the Linth: beside these two principal branches, several smaller springs, and numberless little fountains, gush from the rock.—The clearness of the streams; their rapidity and murmuring sound; the trees that hang over the point from whence they issue; the rude rocks above; the rich meadows and scattered hamlets—all together form an assemblage of the most lively and pleasing objects that ever entered into a beautiful landscape.

I am informed by David Pennant, Esq. that salmons force their way annually from the sea as high as this river, to deposit their spawn. Their progress is up the Rhine, and out of that noble river up the Aar, and through the lake of Zurich into the Linth; a course of many hundred miles. They are taken in these distant parts in September and October, and about the size of seventeen or twenty pounds weight.

We crossed the Linth several times, which rushes with all the violence of a torrent; and came at length to an amphitheatre of mountains, where the valley ended: on our right-hand a fall more considerable than any we had yet seen, tumbling perpendicularly over a bare rock in a large body of water; the alps on each side crowned with inaccessible forests, and covered with everlasting snow; before us a pyramidical mountain, bare and craggy; and the glaciers of Glaris closing the view. Here the valley, and the habitable part of the canton terminate. We then quitted the plain, and ascending through a wild forest of beech and pines, continued more than an hour mounting a very steep and rugged path, till we came to the Panten-Bruck, a bridge over the cataract that forms the Linth, which is here called the Sand-bach: it roars from the glacier down the steep mountain in one unbroken fall; and, a little way before its arrival under the bridge, works itself a subterraneous passage through the rock, where it is lost only to appear again with increased violence and precipitation. The bridge is a single arch of stone, of about seventy feet in length, thrown over a precipice of above three hundred feet in depth. It serves as a communication with the upper alps, and is the passage for the cattle which are fed there during the summer months; on the other side some goats came jumping around us, and seemed to welcome us to their dreary habitations. These mountains are covered with a great variety of rare plants, which made me regret, that I had not pursued my botanical studies. As I leaned upon the parapet of the bridge, and looked down into the chasm beneath, my head

almost turned giddy with the height. The rock, down which the Sand-bach drives, is composed of slate². After we had continued some time admiring the sublime horror of the scenery, we descended into the valley, and made a hearty meal upon some excellent bread, honey, butter, and milk, which a neighbouring cottage supplied. As the canton almost entirely consists of rich meadows, the milk and butter are delicious; and the honey of these mountainous countries is most exquisite. Nothing delights me so much as the inside of a Swiss cottage: all those I have hitherto visited, convey the liveliest image of cleanliness, ease, and simplicity; and cannot but strongly impress upon the observer a most pleasing conviction of the peasant's happiness.

If I had never seen these little democratical states, I could have formed no idea of the general equality and indistinction that prevails among the inhabitants. All the houses, like those of Appenzel, are built of wood; large, solid, and compact, with great penthouse roofs that hang very low, and extend beyond the area of the foundation. This peculiar structure is of use to keep off the snow; and, from its singularity, accords surprisingly with the beautiful wildness of the country. The houses of the richer inhabitants in the

² This stone is very common here, the valley of *Sernst* contains the finest quarries, whence they bring plates large enough to make table boards of, which make a considerable article of exportation. Among these slates there are many with fine impressions of vegetables, of skeletons and fish, and of several kinds of crustaceous animals, as well as elegant superficial dendritæ, the neatest and most perfect are found in the *Blattenberg*. RAMOND.

principal burghs, are of the same materials: the only difference consists in their being larger.

If that sort of government be confessedly the best, which constitutes the greatest good of the greatest number in the community; these little states, notwithstanding the natural defects of a democratical constitution, may justly claim a large share of our approbation. General liberty, general independence, and an exemption from arbitrary taxes, are blessings which amply compensate for a want of those refinements that are introduced by opulence and luxury. But it is only in these small republics, and in such a state of society, that this kind of general democracy can have place. And although the machine of government is considerably clogged by that variety of wheels required to put it into motion; yet it is not necessary that its decisions should be sudden and expeditious: for, as there is no fear of an invasion, and as the people have no conquests either to make or to defend; their principal policy consists in maintaining their independence, and in preserving the public tranquillity.

The police is well regulated throughout Switzerland; and even in these democratical states, liberty does not often degenerate into licentiousness: we may except, perhaps, the day of their general assemblies, when it is impossible to prevent some degree of confusion in a meeting where there is scarcely any distinction of persons; and where every peasant considers himself as equal to the first magistrate.

Our host is an open-hearted, honest Swiss: he brings his pint of wine, sits down to table with us, and chats without the least ceremony. There

is a certain forwardness of this kind which is insupportable when it apparently is the effect of impertinent curiosity, or fawning officiousness; but the present instance of frank familiarity, arising from a mind conscious of its natural equality, and unconstrained by arbitrary distinctions, is highly pleasing; as the simple demeanour of unsophisticated nature is far preferable to the false refinements of artificial manners.

I am, &c.

Part of the French translator's journey.

As an appendix to the description of *Glaris* I shall subjoin a narrative of one of my journeys in these mountains; and finish the picture of its moral and political state with an account of a general assembly at which I assisted.

A wall of very high and almost inaccessible rocks, about four leagues in breadth, whose top is covered with rich pastures belonging in common to the inhabitants of *Glaris* and *Uri*, divides the plains of these two cantons.

In the month of July 1777 I arrived at *Altdorf*, the capital of the canton of *Uri*, where I made some stay at my return from a journey to the *Vallais* which I closed with a ramble to the *Furca* and mount *St. Gothard*; it was my plan to enter the canton of *Glaris* over this ridge of mountains; I had a companion, and we were both accustomed to the hazardous and fatiguing journeys over the Alps; little afraid of being bewildered we set out without a guide. About a league from *Altdorf* we entered the valley of *Schächen*, stretching from west to east, and rising insensibly to the foot of the mountains. At eleven o' clock at night we arrived at *Unterschächen*, a small village almost in the bottom, and four leagues from its entrance. Here we proposed to pass the rest of the night, but the inhabitants being all asleep we gave up all hopes of finding a cover, and had already determined to continue our journey

journey which the serenity of the night would have rendered very agreeable; the moon rose exceedingly bright, silvering the ice on the *Clausenberg*, the stars glittered with unusual lustre, and betokened such a night and dawn as are only to be seen in the Alps; fatigue, however, and the numbing cold prevailing on these heights, caused us to change our plan; we knocked at the door of the curate, who in this village as well as in all the others of Switzerland, where there is no inn, is the refuge of travellers. The maid opened the door, and having regaled us with bread and cheese, showed us a bed, which, though none of the best, was good enough for half a night. We got up very early in the morning and were on the road before four of the clock.

From *Unterschächen* the ascent becomes more sensible, the valley grows narrow, and we came to the foot of the mountains that close it. Having walked about an hour we arrived at *Esch*, an inconsiderable hamlet built on the declivity of the mountain, where we saw the path winding up the steep ascent; we thought to have reached the top in a quarter of an hour; but great was our mistake, we were a full hour in climbing it; nor would I advise any body to attempt this eminence after such a fatiguing journey as we had just made.* The prospect we had before us of the whole valley was as beautiful as the view of our path was singular; at every step we saw its whole length, from the plain we had left, up to the top we were going to reach; and it is impossible to guess where it leads to: the road ends abruptly at a wall of rocks pierced by many caverns to which it seems to lead;

* We had travelled above fourscore leagues over the higher Alps of the canton of *Berne*, and the *Vallais*, without taking any rest; and before that we had walked more than two hundred leagues; after such an expeditious journey nobody will be surprised to see us make one of twelve from *Unterschächen* to *Glaris* with so much celerity, spite of the weariness of which we complained; we were well used to march, and never shrunk at fatigue. Patience and perseverance overcome the greatest difficulty.

but under this rock it turns off through a crack to the left of the mountain. Here the scene is totally changed, and instead of the valley, we saw but a small plain watered by a purling brook and quite encompassed with rocks, whereof those that fronted us were placed in one row, resembling by their perpendicularity an old fortification flanked with towers; some empty stone-huts scattered here and there along the brook added to the wildness of the scene. The situation and different issues of this sequestered place put us in great perplexity, and we knew not for some time which way to take; at last determined by the most apparent probabilities, we went along this wall of rocks, crossed a valley skirted on the right by the lofty *Gomliberg* covered with eternal snow, and bespread with glaciers whose whiteness is contrasted by towering peaks of dark granite.

After a march of three quarters of an hour we arrived at the end of the valley; having beneath us, in the same direction, a larger and more fruitful one, bounded on the left by the same wall of rocks and on the right by the *Gomliberg*. This valley displayed the finest landscape to our view, its rich meadows were dotted with cottages and irrigated by the *Linth* flowing gently between two rows of trees at the foot of the mountains. We descended into this pretty vale by a very steep road; if a large hollow, or rather a whole side of a mountain formed by loose stones continually rolling under our feet, and rendering every step of our progress extremely painful, may be called a road. Tired and hungry we entered into a cottage and drank some milk; nothing is so rural, so peaceful and so pastoral as this valley; it does not seem to have any issue, but to be quite sequestered from the rest of the world, and screened from intrusion by the enormous bulwarks that surround it.

Having refreshed ourselves and inquired after the right way, we continued our journey. The valley descends sensibly and grows more narrow till to the bourn which separates the canton of *Uri* from that of *Glaris*; here it changes to a wild and

busby dell, opening into a deep vale entirely overshaded by a wood of firtrees, where the *Linth* rolls its roaring billows over scattered fragments of rocks. Loft and bewildered in this wood, we resolved to trace the current which, in our apprehension, must descend into the plains of *Glaris*; the hoarse noise of a distant waterfal rustling among the trees struck us on a sudden and made it unsafe to advance farther, taking therefore another route, we met two peasants who were also going to *Glaris*, and offered to guide us. Although this descent was dreadfully steep, yet our guides found it too smooth, and having asked us, whether our feet and hands were used to clamber, struck into the most terrible road that ever was trodden, a trackless path leading strait down the steepy descent of the mountain, broken by many crags along which we were forced to glide, and where the least trip would have been mortal. The precipice had till now been hid from our eyes by some tufts of fir-saplings; but the path winding over a beetling cliff, we saw from a height of more than fifteen hundred feet the whole plain of *Glaris* beneath us; the prospect was beautiful beyond conception, my head, however, was not steady enough to behold it for a long time; it grew giddy, and my legs began to stagger. I must confess that in all my peregrinations, over the wildest regions of the Alps and the most rugged mountains of the *Vallais*, I have not met with a road so horrid as this. Travellers who know but the high-roads and some of the most frequented crossways over the Alps have no idea of such grand scenes, nor of the dangers one is exposed to in the heart of the mountains.

At the foot of the mountain, and built on its declivity, lies the village of *Linthal*, which half an hour before we had seen under our feet; it is about six leagues from *Unterschachen*.

The plain of the canton of *Glaris* is very populous. There are between *Linthal* and the burgh of *Glaris*, a tract of about six leagues, no less than seven considerable villages, besides several smaller ones and hamlets, which render the road extremely picturesque. Here a cluster of neat and well-built

houses bespeak the prosperity of the peasants; women and children gathered round their dwellings are busy at different works; farther off rich pastures and fruitful orchards witness the fertility of the country; the numberless streams that fertilize the soil, lucid like the air that surrounds them, and as pure as the virgin-snow by which they are fed, infuse vigor and health into the whole vegetation; but averting for a moment the eyes from this charming landscape, to admire the frame that encompasses it, how magnificent is the spectacle! a chain of cloud-kept hills, the bulwark, the treasury and the ornament of the country, bounds on every side the view; inaccessible glaciers crown their frowning tops, and contrast the rocks that support them, and the pastures they seem to protect. Were it not evident that these stupendous heaps are nature's great workshop, the reservoir of our rivers, one should be inclined to think that she built this strong wall in order to inclose a country she seems to have destined for the inviolable asylum of freedom.*

The summit of this chain of mountains is covered with rich pastures thickly besprinkled with cottages and herds, the colonies of the canton. Every thing comes from the Alps, where the cattle multiply: compared with pastures mercantile establishments are of very little weight. What solid advantage can an insignificant manufacture afford? raised by a project, it may perhaps increase population for a moment, and so long as it is alone; but, ruined by the least competition, it will certainly starve those which it promised to feed. Whatever depends on the fashion is alike changeful; the inhabitants of the Alps may be disappointed in their mercantile speculations, but their mountains will never delude their hopes; eternal guardians of their wealth and freedom, they also set

* Nature designed Switzerland for the seat of freedom, and her will must ever prevail against political considerations and the humors of conquerors. Even in those times when Switzerland owned a master, its inhabitants, were not without their *privileges, exemptions and franchises*: they were free, and the least oppression roused them to a vindication of their liberties.

bounds to their population which it would be dangerous to transgress; notwithstanding the barrenness of their soil they do not want means to acquire riches, which would of course be attended by their ordinary concomitants, luxury, depravedness, inequality of fortunes and oppression. *

The burgh of *Glaris* lies in the narrow part of the valley and is built on the declivity of the *Glarnitschenberg* an insulated mountain of an amazing height; it is separated from the burgh of *Enneda* by the river *Linth*. These two neighbouring burghs communicate by a wooden bridge fourscore paces long, of one arch, and built in 1764, by the architect of that of *Schaffhausen*. The construction of this bridge is very simple, and in this work, *Grubenman* seems to have advanced one step nigher to perfection. †

Glaris is remarkable by its situation, its extent, the height of its houses and the number of its inhabitants who are partly Catholics and partly Protestants, and perform their religious

* This is the opinion of a sensible magistrate of this democracy who is no friend to the establishment of manufactures which, he observed to me, tend but to enervate the inhabitants and to multiply their number without increasing their happiness; the pretended riches which they momentarily beget, in a country whose soil does not produce the necessary materials, must needs be subject to the vicissitudes of fashion, and involve on their failure the unhappy race which they created into wretchedness and ruin. The canton of *Glaris* has not long ago undergone such sad reverses, and true patriots opposed with might and main the introduction of certain branches of trade, too seducing because they require but little labor and promise a considerable profit. These manufactures have already deprived the people of their strength. Wrestling, throwing, leaping are no more in vogue; and the inhabitants of the low country form already a generation distinct from the highlanders, being neither so vigorous and bold, nor so wealthy. There must be but one race of people in a free country.

† His last and most perfect work is the bridge of *Wettingen*, over the *Limmath*, a quarter of a league from *Baden*; it is fourscore paces long, of one arch made of pieces of timber, and yet not supported underneath, either with pillars, or any other sort of prop whatever.

exercises in the same church, the only one in the burgh. The little manufactures established here are of the same kind as those of the neighbouring cantons; one of the principal articles of exportation is the *Schabzieger* called improperly cheese of herbs; it is made of the whey or ferous part of the milk which is very abundant and compact. This whey which, as every body knows, differs very much from the cheesy part, being mixed with the dry leaves of the *blue melilot trefoil* (*trifolium melilotus carulea*) and kneaded into a paste, looks and tastes like cheese. The *Schabzieger* is a very valuable article of trade and belongs almost exclusively to the canton of *Glaris*, the canton of *Appenzell* making it neither so good nor in so great quantity.

During my stay in *Glaris* they were talking about a general assembly, that had been adjourned for different reasons, and put off from day to day, but seemed at last fixed for the latter end of the month. One of the principal objects of this assembly was the ratification of the treaty of alliance which had been previously concluded between France and the different members of the Helvetic body. A respectable magistrate of the canton with whom I had got acquainted in one of my peregrinations, and who had received me in a very friendly manner and with that openheartedness which is proper to his country, invited me to assist at this assembly, assuring me that I should certainly be pleased to see republicans freely declare themselves friends to the French. I accepted his invitation; but having yet some excursions to make into the neighbouring regions, I set out resolved to be back in due time.

The 25th of July I returned to my friend in *Glaris*; a peasant of the Alps, whom I met on my way going to the general assembly, proved a very entertaining companion. He was a middleaged man of a severe countenance but whose discourse bespoke a strong mind and so much good sense, that in our conversation I was afraid of starting subjects he might deem trifling. How different is the republican of the Alps, whose aspect and gait betray a consciousness of

independence, from the miserable peasant debased by servitude. We talked of the general concerns of the canton, and of the object of the assembly, having told my companion that I was a Frenchman, he gave me every information I asked for, with such heart-felt satisfaction as proved every body pleased with the alliance, and that the treaty which united the two nations was a tie that joined the individuals. Were I to relate here what this shepherd said of the republican constitution, its defects and advantages, of the rights of men and of citizens, of the relation and origin of the different forms of government, I should deform, by an ostentatious display of technical terms, plain truths expressed with the greatest simplicity, and make talk like a philosopher who by reasoning approaches unto the true principles, a man who has them so deeply engraved in his heart by the hand of nature that neither education nor laws can erase them.*

Sunday the 27th was fixed for the general assembly, I accompanied my friend the magistrate to *Schwanden*, a large and wealthy burgh a league from *Glaris* in whose neighbourhood the assembly is held. A large plain situate between the burgh and the mountain serves usually for the meeting: the rain and an inundation caused by the overflowing of the rivers had detained the greatest part of the peasants, and there was but one third of the voters present at the meeting. It was, however,

* The Swiss I am describing here is the inhabitant of a democratical state. The peasant subject to an aristocracy, where he has no share in the government, ranks with others of his class; his mind having no object to exert itself upon, his passions can never display themselves; he is a man like others, yet he has some of that strength of character which the climate and the nature of government imprint on the minds of all the inhabitants of Switzerland. In the democracies he has a high idea of his individual importance and a lively sense of liberty and independence; he learns to know and to discuss his rights, he investigates the springs of government, he reasons and studies. The histories of the ancient republics are read in the alps, and several cottages are furnished with libraries.

necessary to observe the forms, and the *Landamman* as president of the council summoned the people to the church in order to take the sense of the assembly, whether they would proceed without waiting for their fellow-citizens or adjourn to the next day. We had been joined by three Englishmen who were travelling in the canton; on the president's asking the people's leave to introduce into the assembly four foreigners one of whom was a Frenchman they assented with cheerful shouts.

I must own that I was a little frightened at my first entrance into the church; to see more than twelve hundred people cooped up in a narrow and sonorous nave reverberating their clamorous vociferations, the council with the president pressed in the centre, and threatened by a party of malecontents whose turbulency it was not in their power to restrain, was a shocking spectacle to men accustomed only to the debates in a court of justice and the noise of a pit. From their ignorance of the German language our Englishmen remained longer in suspense than I, who had no sooner recovered from my flutter than I attended with the most perfect composure; so little, however, did the different speakers suit their action to the subject of their discourse, that the most trifling objection was often uttered with a thundering voice, and accompanied with gestures that betrayed the most violent resentment, and threatened instant hostilities.

The question was hotly agitated during more than two hours, and there was a very strong opposition against the president and one of the counsellors, who having been appointed to go, as commissaries of the canton, to *Soleure*, in order to sign the preliminaries of the treaty, were accused by their adversaries of having gone beyond their powers, which they pretended contained some restrictions. These, trusting in their numbers, opposed the motion for an adjournment, which was, however at last carried by a majority of the other party, who judged the business important enough to require the suffrages of the greater number of the inhabitants of the canton. After a

long debate the assembly was adjourned to the next day; the evening and part of the night we spent at an entertainment given by the peasants who were for the magistrates. The firmness with which the president withstood the repeated attacks of the opposition, the art with which he governed the different tempers, and the magnanimity with which he made his defence, at this meeting and that of the following day, were surprising.

These general assemblies prove often fatal to magistrates suspected of having abused their power, and to such citizens as are thought to have too much influence, they risk to be judged on the spot with that violent hurry which characterizes the judgments of a provoked people, and to fall a sacrifice to the fury of their adversaries. Instances of this summary way of proceeding are not rare in the annals of Switzerland; however, not to sadden my narrative by the relation of tragic tales, I shall cite but one. Some peasants of the canton of Zug happening to take umbrage at the exorbitant riches of their neighbour, which without increasing his comforts might procure him an influence dangerous to liberty, the general assembly of the canton ordered him to exhibit a statement of his fortune; it was divided in two parts, one of which was returned to him and was sufficient to render him still one of the richest men in the canton; the other half was distributed by heads.*

On Sunday the voters arrived from all parts at Schwanden, and their number being very high complete, they went the following morning to the plain where the assembly was to be held. It is a spacious meadow, situate at the foot of a

* Whenever the general assembly punishes with a pecuniary penalty, the fine is divided equally among its members; it amerces therefore always in a sum determined by heads; these heads are either those of the voters or of those present in the assembly, or all the heads in the canton without distinction, and of whatever age or sex. A fine of a guilder per head in this last sense ruins the most opulent of a canton.

mountain in the neighbourhood of the burgh. There were four rows of benches prepared, which formed a circle of about three hundred feet in the diameter. The magistrates having taken their seats in the interior circle, the people, consisting of about four thousand men all in arms, sat down promiscuously, leaving however the best places and those nearest the magistrates to the curates of the canton. The president, leaning on the sword of liberty*, stood with his clerk almost in the centre, they were attended by two sergeants in their livery cloaks. The women do not come near the circle, but the boys who are yet under sixteen are admitted into the middle where, however, they are not allowed to stand either out of respect to the magistrates, or not to interrupt the voters.

A meeting of free men assembled to debate on their common interests, sitting on the earth that gave them birth, that feeds them, and which they defended against despotical usurpations, having before them their children already animated with a love of liberty, which they are taught to cherish and to transmit entire to their posterity, is a grand and awful spectacle. More magnificent than the most stately pile, this beautiful valley, protected by the natural bulwarks of the country, bestrowed with cottages and covered with flocks and herds, must by the continual display of its charms endear their native soil to the inhabitants. I beheld with amazement awful grandeur so sublimely blended with reverend simplicity, a union worthy the first ages of nations; such, said I, were the ancient Romans and the republicans of Greece; such were the virtuous Gauls, and our forefathers, the valiant Germans. . . . The idea that these plain people are assembled to treat on an equal footing with the most magnificent empire in the world will increase our astonishment, by presenting to us the most singular political and moral contrast recorded in history.

* The president leans on a long and clumsy sword, such as the Swiss used formerly, in their wars against the Austrians; it has no ornaments and is the weapon of a patriot of the fourteenth century. A majestic sceptre in the hands of a free man.

The assembly was opened by the president who, in a simple and unaffected speech gave an account of his commission and of the reasons that induced him to sign the treaty. After him his colleague got up to speak on the same subject, and expressed himself in the strongest terms and with that expressive eloquence which renders even the poorest language interesting. The corrupt dialect of the country was peculiarly graceful in his mouth. This discourse made a very striking effect, and I had for the first time the pleasure to distinguish the gradations of sensibility in simple and unconstrained physiognomies. The president had persuaded the auditory, his colleague made them pleased with their conviction, and all concurred to applaud the conduct of their magistrates.

The president then proposed the ratification expected by the French ambassador at *Soleure*. An object of such moment required the majority of voices; but the whole assembly cried unanimously that it was needless to tell them, and that the citizen who was no friend to the French should not be known; the valley resounded again with acclamations of which I was proud to explain the meaning to my English companions. A letter was instantly written by the clerk and signed by the president, which the people ordered one of the sergeants to carry forthwith to *Soleure*; pleased with his commission, the messenger thanked his fellow-citizens, and set off amidst their cheerful shouts. My friend the magistrate, having embraced me, desired that when passing through *Soleure* I should relate to the ambassador the scene I had just now witnessed. This commission I had the pleasure of performing about a week after.

The assembly were now proceeding to fill different public employments; after the president has mentioned the vacant office the clerk goes round the circle and writes down the names of those which are proposed. Every citizen has a right to propose; but the numbers of those who either by their merits or talents may pretend to an office being very small, there are few candidates, and these carry mostly all the votes: the list is then delivered to the president who offers the candidates one after the other

to the suffrages of the people; as their names are called over, the votes given by a show of hands are told, and the names of those who have the least number are set aside; the lot or the same manner of voting decides between the remaining candidates. By this tedious way of proceeding the session, which had begun at ten in the morning, was protracted till seven in the evening; the president was putting an end to it when an affair of a quite different nature called for the attention of the assembly.

Two peasants, both turned sixty, came to solicit the people for a dispensation to marry near relations to whom they intended to secure competent fortunes. Having exposed their reasons, several members got up to speak in favor of the petitioners, but they were interrupted by a curate who in a learned speech, defended the rights of the clergy, and proved that the body politic had no right to interpose in ecclesiastical affairs, and that the legislative powers of the general assembly were limited by the laws of God and the church. He concluded with entreating the people to refer this business and every other of the same kind to the ecclesiastical consistory. This proposal was objected to by a simple shepherd, who made a distinction between prohibited degrees, whereof some, he said, are forbidden by the laws of God, and others by those of man; pretending that the church could no more grant an exemption from the first than laymen; and that the second were mere civil impediments which the sovereign, having the power to make and to revoke laws, may remove at his pleasure, he concluded with advising the general assembly to decide in favor of the dispensation. A humorist, for even the Alps produce some, observed to the assembly, that since these two old men had such a violent desire to marry, it was much better to let them satisfy it at the expense of their families, than at that of others. This observation excited a general laugh, which was followed by an argument as forcible as it was simple. *If the laws are just, said a peasant, dispensations are favors, and favors must only be granted in*

circumstances where the infringement of the laws is likely to be attended with considerable advantages; but what benefit will accrue to the state from the marriage of two old men; reject, therefore, their petition and reserve your dispensation for marriageable people: This proposal was received with universal applause, the two old men were dismissed; and it was agreed to make at the next meeting a law on this important subject.

Thus ended this assembly which I attended during nine hours without feeling the least impatience, as it afforded me frequent opportunities to observe and to admire the judgment, the experience and the character of the inhabitants of these democratical states. A fastidious Frenchman, accustomed to complain of the inflexibleness of his language, would be surprised to hear people, animated by a lively sense of what they are saying, express the different emotions of the mind in the rudest and most corrupt dialect of the German tongue; as the passions ever modify the language their speech is by turns manly and vigorous, effeminate and tender.

This diet was an extraordinary one by the season as well as by its duration and object. The regular assemblies are of three kinds: the first, being those of parishes, meet at *Glaris*; every parish appoints its deputies to the council; the protestant parishes, fifteen in number, send four for each, except that of *Glaris*, which being mixed sends but three. The Catholic parishes, being but two, and two filials, send eight deputies, to which they add two adjuncts, created in consequence of the convention of 1683, in order to compensate the smallness of their number.

These meetings are followed by the *general assemblies*, and by the *universal assembly*. This last, vested with public authority and legislative power, is held on the third Sunday in April; the magistrates, however, have assumed a right to summon it eight days sooner or later. In the general assemblies the Protestants and the Catholics meet separately, the first at *Schwanden* and the others at *Näfels*. Both sects had fixed the same day for these solemnities; but the Protestants having

conserved the Julian calendar, while the Catholics received the new style, they never meet on the same day.

The reason of the obstinacy of the Protestants of *Appenzell* and *Glaris* to conserve the old style is very singular; an ancient treaty, unfavorable to their sect, obliged them to abstain from work on the holidays of the Catholics; when these therefore adopted the correction of the calendar the others refused to receive it, because the feasts falling no more on the same days, they could not be compelled to an observance of them.

The councils of the two religions were separated by the treaty of 1683; each sect judges its own criminals; a right they have seldom occasion to exercise, among these happy people capital offences are so rare that there is not even a public executioner in the canton; having about twenty years ago condemned a malefactor to death, they were obliged to send for a hangman from a neighbouring country. There needs no other proof of the happiness of this nation; a constitution, which so powerfully restrains all men from doing hurt to one another, is deservedly admired by such as know crimes only by the laws that punish them.

LETTER 7.

The Abbey of Einsidlin — Rapperschwyl.

Einsidlin, July 31.

WE could not pass through this part of the country, without making a pilgrimage to Einsidlin, and paying our respects to this celebrated shrine: an object of much devotion among the Catholics. Einsidlin, or *Notre Dame des Hermites*, is a rich and magnificent abbey of Benedictines in the canton of *Schweitz*, which owes its celebrity to the miraculous image, as it is called, of the Virgin Mary.

The ridiculous tales they relate of the origin and aggrandizement of this abbey, are so many melancholy instances of the credulity of the darker ages: that they are still believed in the present enlightened century, must be attributed to the force of habitual prejudice; and at the same time proves, how difficult it is for the human mind to shake off those superstitious errors, which it has early imbibed under the name of religion.

In the ninth century a certain hermit called Meinrad, was the first who retired to this place, where he built a chapel, and was assassinated by robbers. But shall I tell you, or (what is more to the purpose) will you believe me if I tell you, that this murder was discovered by two crows, who followed the assassins to Zurich, where they were seized and executed? Soon after, the dead body of St. Meinrad of course works miracles; and all the world pilgrimises to his bones. The sanctity of this place being thus established, some one (for whether it were St. Benno or St. Eberhard, or what other saint I cannot precisely determine) constructed another chapel, which he dedicated to the Virgin, and laid the first foundation of the abbey; having bequeathed for that purpose his whole fortune: and the pious fund was soon considerably augmented by subsequent donations. Shall I tell you also, that in 948, Conrad, bishop of Constance, as he was going to consecrate the chapel, heard a voice from heaven, assuring him, that God himself had consecrated it³? Whatever was its origin, and whoever was its founder;

³ This is the purport of a Latin inscription engraved on the chapel of the Virgin. RAMOND.

crowds of pilgrims resort hither from all quarters to adore the Virgin, and to present their offerings: and it is computed, that upon the most moderate calculation, their number amounts yearly to 100,000. The circumjacent country was formerly a continued forest, which since the erection of the abbey has been gradually converted into rich pastures and beautiful meadows: and this is a miracle which the Virgin, in a certain sense, may be truly said to have performed.

August 1.

I have just been visiting the abbey, the chapel of the Virgin, and her immense treasures. The church of the abbey is a large and magnificent building, but exhibits a remarkable specimen of false taste, by being loaded with bad paintings, and superfluous ornaments ⁴. In the aisle not far from the entrance, is a small and elegant marble chapel of the Corinthian order ⁵: this is the celebrated shrine of the Virgin, to which the pilgrims resort. On the outside an angel supports the following inscription:

Hic est plena remissio peccatorum omnium a culpa & pœna.

Over the door is a plate of silver with five holes, into which I saw several persons thrusting their fingers, and praying at the same time with great fervor: upon inquiry I found, that the credulous people believed these holes to be the marks

⁴ In each of the four corners of the nave there is a very fine organ. RAMOND.

⁵ It is a small church, having a door and a cupola. R.
of

of God's fingers ⁶. In the inside of this chapel is the image of the Virgin, which vies with the lady of Loretto in *beauty* of countenance; her face, as well as that of the child she holds in her arms, being black. She is richly apparelled, and changes her garment every week; her wardrobe consisting of fifty-two different suits.

The riches of the treasury are immense; containing numberless offerings of gold, silver, and precious stones, arranged in the most ridiculous manner;—also skulls and bones sumptuously ornamented; whole skeletons of saints in masquerade, and of ladies with ruffles, fly-caps, and splendid apparel as if dressed for a ball. What a wretched insult upon poor human nature! I could not help considering them with a mixture of pity and indignation, as the offerings of ignorance before the shrine of bigotry and superstition. The miracles which the Virgin has wrought in this country are infinite, if we may judge from the numerous figures of ears, eyes, legs, arms, heads, &c. presented by those, who fancied themselves respectively cured in those several members, by the power of this wonder-working image.

I was glad however to find, in the midst of this superstitious trumpery, a good library, which contained some fine editions of the classics.

In this place there is a considerable traffic in rosaries, crosses, and little images; and there are rows of shops, where nothing is to be purchased but these necessary appendages of the Roman

⁶ This plate is one foot high and full as broad as the door; it is adorned with an embossed foliage of acanthus in a Gothic taste. RAMOND;

Catholic religion: it has all the appearance of a fair. There is also a room in the abbey, where the same kind of merchandise is exposed to sale; and one of the friars attends to receive your money, and very gravely assures you, that the several articles have touched the sacred image. Among other curiosities of this kind, I purchased two ribands, for two pence each, with the following inscription upon them: *Ce Ruban entier, est la longueur; jusqu'au trait est l'épaisseur de l'image de Notre Dame des Hermites. Il a touché l'image miraculeuse.*

This abbey is very rich, and has considerable revenues in the canton of Zurich. The abbot, who is titular prince of the German empire, is elected by sixty Benedictines, that form the chapter.

As I walked to this celebrated convent, I found the whole way furnished with stalls, provided with cakes, whey, and other refreshments for the numerous pilgrims then on their road. I saw several hundreds, in groups of different numbers. Some consisted of a whole parish, attended by their spiritual pastor. More than once, I observed some grievous sinner driven from the flock, and walking at a distance counting his beads, bare-footed and bare-headed, doing full penance for his crimes. I also saw several bevvies of merry damsels, who seemed to enjoy the pilgrimage as much as Welsh lasses relish a wake. They often turned into the little chapels which lay open on the way, and wantonly sprinkled each other with holy water.

This day's journey reminded me of Chaucer's Tales, in which he exactly describes this pilgrimage, in his account of that to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury:

*From every place the pious rambles stray,
But most to good Einsidlin bend their way;
There, at the virgin's shrine, a cure they find
For each sick body, and each love-sick mind.*

Rapperschwyl, August 2.

The evening, yesterday, being fine and cool, I walked from Einsidlin to this place. After we had ascended about three miles, a view of the lake of Zurich, and of the adjacent country, opened upon us at once. The prospect was extensive and beautiful: the solemn stillness of the evening, the calmness of the lake, and the tints of the setting sun, which glowed around the horizon, very much improved its charms. When we arrived at the lake, the moon began to rise; and, throwing its beams across the water, formed another scene, more mild indeed, but not less affecting. We then crossed the bridge of Rapperschwyl, built over the narrowest part of the lake: it measured near 1700 paces ⁷. The town is pleasantly situated upon a neck of land or promontory. It formerly threw itself under the protection of Uri, Schwitz, Unterwalden, and Glaris, with a reserve of all its privileges: but these cantons shamefully oppressing the inhabitants, and encroaching upon their liberties; Zurich and Berne took possession of the town in 1712, and restored its ancient immunities. From that period Rapperschwyl has continued under the protection of Zurich, Berne, and Glaris;

⁷ This bridge is thrown over a shallow part of the lake, it has no railing, nor are the planks made fast, which would expose the piles to be shaken and plucked up by the violence of the wind. Those that venture over it in stormy weather must not be surprised to see the planks before and behind them carried away by the wind. RAMOND.

the latter having preserved its right by its neutrality. By this treaty the town having recovered its former prerogatives, the inhabitants, in testimony of their gratitude, placed the following inscription over the gates : *Amicis Tutoribus floret libertas* ^s.

This small republic is governed by a great and little council, consisting of forty-eight members. The town contains two hundred burghers, and about a thousand inhabitants, all Catholics. Its territory is about a league in circumference, and comprehends three parishes.

Yours, &c.

Part of the French translator's journey.

I am surpris'd at the criticisms of Mr. Coxe. The traveller who has traversed the beautiful country which surrounds the abbey, and the stately avenues that terminate in the valley presenting a magnificent pile, raised in the midst of a woody desert, must be insensible to the beauties of nature, and void of enthusiasm, when at the sight of such a picture he does not relax from the severity of his judgment.

The prospect of this monastery, situate in the midst of a wild valley, struck me with wonder; its architecture is fine and the whole executed in a grand style; a gentle ascent brings to a majestic flight of steps leading to the platform of the edifice. The building is large and well designed; the chapel consecrated to the miraculous image, is placed in the nave of the church, as a sanctuary intrusted to its walls,

^s The issue of the war of religion of 1712 was as favorable to the Protestants as that of 1656 had been to the Catholics. Although it may appear strange that a *Catholic town* should be oppressed by *Catholic democrats*, and delivered from their yoke by *Protestant Aristocrats*, yet is this not the only instance of the spirit of despotism so prevalent in the freest cantons. R.

and carefully guarded by a double inclosure. The inside of this chapel is very gloomy, being but dimly lighted by two sepulchral lamps; a third light artfully hidden, and only furnished by its effect, throws a brilliant beam on the face of the virgin. It is impossible to enter this chapel without awful reverence; its pavement is continually covered with prostrate sinners wrapt in meditation, and happy to have attained the end of their pilgrimage. A place where weak and suffering humanity comes to seek for relief from anguish, where frightened consciences seek shelter from the storms by which they are beaten; a place where the miserable slave of his scruples finds a sure remedy for the pains of guilt, perhaps fancied; and the more precious when they are so, cannot but suggest satisfactory reflections in the breast of a philosophical beholder.* Human weakness is deserving of our pity, and the least of its hopes merit our respect; Why should we deprive of her pleasing confidence the credulous and timid soul, who claims so forcibly the indulgence of the philosopher, and the tender cares of strong minds?

The abbey of *Einsidlin* communicates with the burgh of *Schweitz* by two roads. That over the plain being very easy and fit for carriages is the most frequented. I took the shortest which leads over the *Hakenberg*; it is painful but commands the most picturesque views.

From the village of *Einsidlin*, which surrounds the monastery there is an issue into a narrow bosky vale inclosed by sloping hills decked with an agreeable verdure, but little inhabited; about a mile from the village there is a convent of benedictine nuns, built at the foot of the hills and imbosomed in

* Indulgences are said to favor crimes by destroying the fear of future punishment, and by holding out a remission of sins. This kind of reasoning seems to bespeak little knowledge of the human heart; the sinner who repenteth and obtains absolution cannot be so far out of the road of virtue, as the reprobate, who without any hope of pardon abandons himself to black despair.

trees, which give it a romantic and cloisteral appearance. Here the valley grows narrower, and the ground rising insensibly stretches to high and craggy mountains covered with gloomy pines. The road leading to this forest is pretty rough, and formed like that described by Mr. Coxe, p. 51. of thick round stakes closely laid together, where men and horses may have a sure tread; it is skirted and cut by several small currents, and extremely wild; it was the 31st of May and the tops of the mountains were still covered with snow. This uneven summit being clad with grass unfit for pasture was quite desert; on the right two high rocks of a conical figure, rear their peaks to the skies; these are the summits of the *Hackenberg*, but so rugged and so bare that nothing is seen on them but some tufts of yews not higher than small shrubs.* I was hastening over the platform of the mountain down into the burgh of *Schweitz* when one of the finest prospects the Alps afford suddenly struck my eye; a very steep descent into the burgh; a ridge of mountains separating two lakes one of which was that of *Lawerz*, the other a narrow arm of that of *Lucerne* or *Gersau*, encompassed with high perpendicular rocks darkening its waters. All around I could descry nothing but mountains covered with trees and pastures, overpeering that whereon I stood, and divided by a labyrinth of fruitful vallies. Further off the scene expanded, the summits rose gradually, tapering into barren peaks covered with snow; and my view was bounded by the *St. Gothard*, whose top at a distance of sixteen leagues seemed to be lost in the clouds. Six weeks after, happening to wander over this mountain,

* The yew grows on the naked rocks and at heights where no other shrub is seen to vegetate. These highlanders have almost the same veneration for the wood of this tree as our ancestors when they used it for their bows and lances. The felling of it for any other use was then forbidden under heavy penalties. It is of such a hardness here that it will resist the reiterated strokes of the sharpest axe.

I saw very clearly the two peaks of the *Hackenberg* overtopping the mountains of *Schweitz* and *Uri*.

I was a full hour descending the *Hackenberg*; the situation of the burgh of *Schweitz*, lying at its foot and not far from the lake of *Lucerne*, is both pleasant and rural.

L E T T E R 8.

Town and Canton of Zurich.

Zurich, August 3.

YESTERDAY we dined luxuriously with the Capuchin friars at *Rapperschwyl*, who seldom treat their guests in so sumptuous a manner. It was one of their great feast-days; and they regaled us with every variety of fish, with which the lake and the neighbouring rivers abound. The convent stands upon the edge of the water, and commands an agreeable prospect: the library is by far the pleasantest apartment, though not the most frequented. The cells of the monks are small, and yet not inconvenient; but cleanliness does not seem to constitute any part of their moral or religious observances. Indeed the very habit of the order is ill calculated for that purpose, as they wear no shirt or stockings, and are clothed in a coarse kind of brown drugged robe, which trails upon the ground. Strange idea of sanctity! as if dirt could be acceptable to the Deity. I reflected with particular satisfaction, that I was not born a member of the Roman Catholic church; as perhaps the commands of a parent, a sudden

disappointment, or a momentary fit of enthusiasm, might have sent me to a convent of Capuchins, and have wedded me to dirt and superstition for life.

After dinner we took leave of our hosts, and departed for Zurich by water: the lake is near ten leagues in length, and one in breadth. This body of water is of an oblong form, and not near so large as that of Constance; but the borders are studded more thickly with villages and towns. The adjacent country is finely cultivated and well peopled; and the southern part of the lake appears bounded with the high stupendous mountains of Schweitz and Glaris: the scenery is picturesque, lively, and diversified.

Zurich was formerly an imperial city, and obtained from the emperor Frederic II. very considerable privileges; which were acknowledged and augmented by several of his successors. The civil war between the magistrates and the people, in 1335, nearly reduced the city to ruins; but the former being banished, the citizens, in 1337, established a new form of government, which was confirmed by the emperor Louis of Bavaria. The exiles, after several fruitless attempts, were at length re-admitted; but, engaging in a conspiracy against the citizens, were discovered, and put to death. In consequence of this transaction, the nobles in the neighbourhood took up arms; and Zurich, after having ineffectually applied for assistance to the emperor Charles IV. formed an alliance with Lucerne, Uri, Schweitz, and Unterwalden, and was admitted a member of their confederacy. This event happened in the year 1351. The four cantons yielded the pre-eminence to Zurich: a privilege it enjoys at present; being

the first canton in rank, and the most considerable in extent both of territory and power next to Berne. In the same year Zurich was assisted by the four cantons against Albert duke of Austria, who besieged the town, and was repulsed with great loss.

Zurich was the first town in Switzerland, that separated from the church of Rome; being converted by the arguments of Zuingli. Of all the reformers (the mild and elegant Melancthon alone excepted) Zuingli seems to merit peculiar esteem: he possessed, to a great degree, that spirit of meekness, moderation, and charity, which are the characteristics of true Christianity; and, amid all the disputes between the Lutherans and the reformed churches, was a constant advocate for peace and reconciliation. He appears indeed to have been perfectly free, as well from that narrow bigotry which makes no distinction between points of the merest indifference, and objects of the greatest importance; as from that overbearing pride, which, while it violently condemns the opinions of others, assumes to itself infallibility with respect to its own. In a word, it was his persuasion, that, provided Christians agree in the most essential articles; they ought meekly to bear with any difference upon subjects less uncontrovertible, and which do not necessarily influence morals.

Ulric Zuingli was born Jan. 1, 1484, at Wildhausen, a small village in the Tockenburgh; and, in the twentieth year of his age, was appointed minister of Glaris. Even before the publication of the sale of indulgences by Leo X. which was the more immediate cause of the reformation, Zuingli had exposed at Glaris several superstitions of the church of Rome; and he gained additional credit,

by preaching at Einsiedlin against vows, pilgrimages, and offerings. After the publication of the sale of indulgences; while Luther was undermining the fabric of papal authority in Germany, Zuingli was no less successful in Switzerland. By his Zeal and intrepidity, and by the irresistible force of truth, he gained so many converts at Zurich (where he had been invited to preach) that in 1524 the magistrates abolished the mass, and other Catholic ceremonies, and introduced the reformed religion. Zuingli had taken such wise precautions, and acted with such extreme moderation, that the disputes between the two sects were carried on with more temper than is usual in religious controversies. The change, which had been some time in agitation, was finally determined by a plurality of voices in the sovereign council; and the people readily and cheerfully obeyed the decision of their magistrates⁹. The example of Zurich was soon followed by Berne, Schaffhausen, Basle, with part of Glaris and Appenzel; the other cantons continuing to adhere to the religion of their ancestors. From this period the two persuasions have been established in Switzerland; but that harmony, which had hitherto subsisted between the cantons, has been occasionally interrupted. In 1531, religious disputes

⁹ The cold blood of the Swiss, and the regard they showed on this occasion for their institutions are truly admirable. Treating the reformation as a matter merely civil, their respect for the decision of the legislature outweighed their attachment to their religion. This is, in my opinion an evident proof that the constitution of Switzerland is natural to the climate and the country, and that here is the birthplace of liberty. There is no such adherence to arbitrary laws. RAMOND.

broke out with so much violence and animosity, as to occasion a civil war; in which the Protestants were defeated, and Zuinge lost his life, in the forty-eighth year of his age, at the battle of Cappel¹. Since that period two other religious wars have been kindled; one in 1656, in which the Catholics gained the advantage; and the other in 1712, when the Protestants proved victorious. The peace of Arau, which terminated these unhappy disputes, has, it is to be hoped, finally composed all religious animosities. By that treaty, which may be considered as a code of toleration among the Swiss; the treatment of the Protestants and Catholics in the common bailliages, is regulated. The first article stipulates, that in all the provinces, which are subject to cantons of different religion, there shall be a perfect equality between the two sects, and that they shall both enjoy the same privileges: to which is added an express prohibition to each party, not to use any terms of raillery or contempt, in speaking of their respective worships.

The canton of Zurich abounds in corn, wine, and excellent pasture. The proportion of grain to the other productions of the earth, will appear from the following calculation. There are 217,424² acres laid out in grain, 14,466 in vines,

¹ It has been urged against Zuinge, as a proof of his persecuting principles, that he was personally engaged in this war against the Catholics. To this it may be answered, That he had used every argument in his power to reconcile the contending parties; that he even openly arraigned the impatient and turbulent zeal of his fellow-citizens; that he acted in obedience to one of the fundamental laws of the republic; and that he accompanied the army by the express command of the magistrates.

² Of 36,000 square feet each.

94,553 in meadows, 42,549 in pasturage, and 103,772 in forest.

As sufficient corn is not produced for the interior consumption, the deficiency is chiefly supplied from Suabia. In order to prevent a scarcity of this material article, a public granary is maintained at the expense of government. The grain is retailed at the common price; but, in seasons of scarcity, is sold considerably cheaper than it can be purchased at the market. The good effects of this establishment appeared at the dearth in 1771; when, on account of the dearth of corn, a pound of bread was sold for ten pence, the same quantity was delivered by government for four pence.

The wine made in the canton forms an inconsiderable object of foreign commerce; the greatest part being consumed in the country. In 1779 were exported 10,029 casks, each containing 180 bottles; in 1781, 24,568, and in 1782, 11,354.

The canton contained, in 1784, 174,572 souls, including 10,500 in the capital. This large population, in proportion to the size of the canton, is owing to the trade of Zurich; as at least two thirds of the inhabitants derive their livelihood by spinning thread and silk, and making linen for the manufactures of the town.

The sovereign power resides exclusively in the burghesses of the town, consisting of about two thousand.

Here I cannot but remark, that a very narrow spirit of policy reigns throughout most of the states in Switzerland; as they seldom confer the burghership. This rule, however, in some of the republics is less scrupulously observed than in others.

But in Zurich a new citizen has not been admitted during these last hundred and fifty years.

It is curious to trace the restrictions which have been gradually laid on granting the burghership. On the 26th of May, 1540, the Sovereign Council issued a decree, importing, that whosoever was desirous of becoming a citizen, should be obliged to produce a certificate of good behaviour, properly witnessed and signed, and bearing the seal of the magistrates of the place in which he formerly resided; and should, before he was enrolled among the burghers, pay ten florins, near *L. 1*, if a native of Switzerland, and double that sum if a stranger. An inhabitant of the town or canton was taxed only at three florins for his admission; and all artists and persons of learning, necessary or useful to the state, were to be received gratis. In 1549, it was enacted, that the burghership should be refused to all who were not possessed of considerable riches, or who did not introduce new arts and trades. This decree was repeatedly confirmed; and, in 1593, it was added, that a new citizen should not be entitled to a share in the government but on the following conditions. If an inhabitant of the canton, he must have resided in the town during ten years; if a native of Switzerland, twenty; if a foreigner, forty; and that he must build or purchase a house within the walls of Zurich: this last article was repealed in 1612. In 1597, the reception of new citizens was delayed for the first time, but only for two years; and in 1610, the admission-money was augmented.

In the commencement of the 17th century, government refused to receive into the Sovereign

Council the noble families of Orel, Pestalutz, and Muralt; which, in 1555 and 1557, had quitted Italy and settled at Zurich: these families, partly on account of having embraced the reformed religion, and partly as persons of capacity and industry, had been received into the burghership, but rendered incapable of enjoying a share in the administration of affairs. This exclusion, again confirmed in 1592, was revoked in 1673, in favor only of the family of Muralt, which exception was obtained by considerable largesses. In 1674, the family of Orel offered to disburse ten thousand florins towards the expence of repairing the fortifications, on condition of being rendered capable of election into the Sovereign Council: their petition was then refused, but generously granted in 1679, without the smallest equivalent.

Finally, on the 7th of January, 1661, the Council determined to make no more burghers; which resolution has been invariably followed.

The burghers, beside the advantage of electing their magistrates, and of aspiring to the administration of affairs, enjoy the sole right of commerce; all strangers, and even subjects, being excluded from establishing manufactures in the city, or in any part of the canton.

The burghers of Zurich, are divided into thirteen tribes; one of which is called *Constaffel*, or the tribe of nobles, although at present not absolutely confined to persons of that description: it enjoys the privilege of giving eighteen members to the Sovereign Council, and six to the Senate, whereas each of the other tribes only supply twelve to the former, and six to the latter.

The legislative authority is vested by the burghers, in the Sovereign Council of two hundred; consisting, however, of two hundred and twelve members drawn from the thirteen tribes, and comprising the Senate or Little Council. This ³ Senate, composed of fifty members, including the two burgomasters, has jurisdiction in all causes civil and criminal: in the former, when the demand is of a certain importance, an appeal lies to the Council of two hundred; but in criminal affairs, their sentence is final, and, when once passed, there is no possibility of obtaining any reversal or mitigation. An excellent maxim! provided the judges are cautious and circumspect, and the laws mild: for there is no greater encouragement to the commission of crimes, than the frequency of pardons. Such an institution, however, ought necessarily to exclude severity of punishment; and could never be admitted in a state, where by the letter of the law the same punishment is inflicted upon a sheepstealer as upon a parricide.

It is to be regretted, that in this republic, as in most other states of Switzerland, there is no precise code of criminal law. The Caroline, or code of Charles V, is ostensibly followed; but on account of its obsolete usages and extreme severity, the sentence is ultimately left to the discretion of the magistrates. For notwithstanding the most perfect integrity, and upright intentions, yet it is hardly possible to suppose, that party, friendship,

³ Formerly the Senate was separated into two equal divisions, which alternately administered the office during six months; and although these divisions still continue, yet, for some time past, they have reunited and acted together.

connexions, and family, should not frequently influence the judges and occasion partial proceedings. It would perhaps well become the wisdom of this enlightened and equitable government, to form a penal code, and to ascertain, with precision, the punishment for each offence. The example of such a republic would in time be followed by the remaining cantons and states of Switzerland; and posterity would bless the name of Zurich for having occasioned the introduction of more settled principles in the criminal courts of justice. Some late decisions have rendered this arrangement more obviously necessary. Several persons disordered in their understandings committed suicide; and, although the circumstances of the crime were nearly similar, yet the most opposite sentences were pronounced on these occasions: so that the families of those, to whom a greater degree of severity was shown, were necessarily more distressed on account of the mildness manifested to the others.

Every judge of delicacy and honor would undoubtedly experience great satisfaction, to find himself restrained by precise laws from listening to solicitations from friends and party, and from being biased by those feelings, of which it is almost impossible to be divested.

The power of the Senate, considered in a collective capacity, is very considerable: it judges finally in all criminal causes, has the care of the police, and supplies the principal magistrates. But, as too great a power of individuals is dangerous in a republic; the members of this assembly are liable to be changed: and a revision or confirmation is annually made, in some instances
by

by the Sovereign Council, in others by the particular tribes to which the senators belong. This annual revision is a great check to mal-administration; and at the same time prevents the Senate from gaining so great an influence, as to be detrimental to the liberties of the people: A burgher is qualified to vote at twenty; is eligible into the Sovereign Council at thirty; and into the Senate at thirty-five. By these wise regulations, a man must have formed some experience in public affairs, before he is capable of holding an important charge. The revenues of government, though not exceeding *L. 65,000 per ann.* are more than proportionate to the expenses; which are regulated with the strictest œconomy. The state is not only without debts, but an annual saving is deposited in the public treasury, for a resort upon any sudden emergency. From this fund government supported the whole expense of the war, in 1712, against the Catholic cantons, without imposing any additional tax.

The canton of Zurich is divided into districts or bailliages, which are governed by bailifs nominated by the Sovereign Council. These bailifs, excepting those of Kyburg and Grunengen, cannot pass capital sentence, or order torture. They can arrest and interrogate the delinquent, and punish small misdemeanors by whipping, or banishment from the bailliage. In capital cases, they examine, make out the verbal process, and send the felon to Zurich for further trial. On inquiring into the state of criminal jurisprudence, I learned with satisfaction, that the question had not been inflicted in the capital for these last nine years, which may be presumed to be a prelude to its total

abolition; but it is much to be regretted, that whipping, which is a species of torture, is not unfrequently applied, in order to force confession, both in Zurich and in the bailliages; an abuse of justice repugnant to the wisdom of so enlightened a government.

The city of Zurich stands at the northern extremity of the lake, and occupies both sides of the rapid and transparent Limmat. Its environs are extremely delightful; an amphitheatre of hills gradually sloping to the borders of the water, enriched with pasture and vines; dotted with innumerable villas, cottages, and hamlets; and backed on the west by the Utliberg, a bold and gloomy ridge stretching towards the Albis, and that chain of mountains which rises gradually to the Alps.

The town is divided into two parts; the old part, surrounded with the same ancient battlements and towers which existed in the thirteenth century, and the suburbs, which are strengthened by fortifications in the modern style, but too extensive. The ditches, instead of being filled with stagnant water, are mostly supplied with running streams. The public walk is pleasantly situated in a lawn, at the junction of the Limmat and the Sil, an impetuous and turbid torrent, which descends from the mountains of Einsiedlin: two rows of lime-trees planted by the side of the Limmat, and following its serpentine direction, afford an agreeable shade in the heat of summer. The inhabitants are very industrious; and carry on with success several manufactures: the principal are those of linens and cottons, muslins, and silk-handkerchiefs. The manufacturers do not in general dwell within the walls; but the materials are mostly

prepared, and the work is completed in the adjacent districts. For this reason Zurich does not exhibit the activity and numbers of a great commercial city. The environs, on the contrary, are so extremely populous, that perhaps few districts in the neighbourhood of a town, whose population scarcely exceeds ten thousand inhabitants, contain within so small a compass so many souls. The streets are mostly narrow; the houses and public buildings accord more with plainness and convenience, than with the elegance and splendor of a capital.

The town contained in 1780, 10,559 souls, in the following proportions: 2583 male burghers, 3464 female burghers; 860 foreign clerics, 250 foreigners; 372 male inhabitants, 444 female inhabitants; 223 men-servants, 1734 maid-servants; and 629 patients in the hospital. The gradual decrease of the population in the town, which arises from the difficulty of obtaining the burghership, will appear from the following table.

1357.	1756.	1762.	1769.	1780.
12375	11012	10616	10574	10559

The increase of luxury and opulence will appear from considering, that in 1357, the number of men-servants amounted to only 84, and of maid-servants to 263; whereas in 1780, the former were 223, and the latter 1734; or near a fifth of the whole population.

The manners of the inhabitants are in general simple, and may perhaps in these times be esteemed antiquated. Dinner is usually served at twelve:

in the afternoon the gentlemen assemble in clubs or small societies, in the town during winter, and at their respective villas in summer. They frequently smoke, and partake of wine, fruit, cakes, and other refreshments. The women, for the most part employed in their domestic occupations, or devoted to the improvement of their children, are not fond of visiting. When they go out, they generally assemble in separate coteries, to which only a few men, and those chiefly the nearest relations, are admitted: many of the ladies indeed, from a consciousness of their provincial accent, and a difficulty of expressing themselves in French, seldom make their appearance when strangers are received. It has more than once happened to me, that on being shown into the apartment wherein the ladies were assembled, the master of the house has taken me by the hand, and led me into another room, where he would have detained me, if I had not requested to be reconducted to the ladies.

This reserve, however, among the ladies begins greatly to abate, and to give place to a more sociable intercourse. Such, however, is the prevalence of national habit, that a few families, which form a more agreeable mixture of company, are considered as differing from the established customs, and are still known by the name of the *French Society*.

Sumptuary laws, as well as those against immorality, are here well observed. The former indeed may exist, and be carried into execution even among a people much corrupted; for it may be the policy of government to enforce their observance. But the severest penalties will not be sufficient to prevent crimes of an immoral

tendency, amidst a general dissoluteness of manners: the popular principles can alone invigorate such laws, and give to them their full operation. Secret crimes cannot be prevented; but it is an evident proof of public virtue, when open breaches of morality are discountenanced. Among their sumptuary laws, the use of a carriage in the town is prohibited to all sorts of persons except strangers: and it is almost inconceivable that, in a place so commercial and wealthy, luxury should so little prevail.

At Zurich the original Swiss spirit of independence prevails more than in any of the large towns in this country. The magistrates, less influenced by foreign courts, and above corruption, generally consult the real advantage of their canton, and of the Helvetic confederacy. Zurich still preserves in the general diet a very considerable sway; which she derives more from the opinion entertained of her integrity, than from her power: she is looked up to as one of the most independent and upright of the thirteen cantons.

The militia of the canton amounted, in 1781, to 25,718 infantry, 1025 artillery, 886 dragoons, and 406 chasseurs; in all 28,235 effective men. There is a military chest at Zurich, established in 1683, and supported by the members of the great council, who, instead of giving an expensive entertainment, are bound on their election or farther promotion to pay a certain sum. From this fund, which has been considerably augmented, L. 2000 was taken, in 1770, for the purpose of establishing a magazine of uniforms and arms, which are either distributed, or sold at a low price to the poor peasants who cannot afford to purchase them

at their full value; each peasant, according to the military laws of the canton, being obliged to possess his arms and uniform.

The arsenal is well supplied with cannon, arms, and ammunition; and contains a reserve of muskets for thirty thousand men. We saw there, and admired, the two-handed swords and weighty armour of the old Swiss warriors; as also the bow and arrow with which William Tell is said to have shot the apple placed on the head of his son.

This canton has a regiment and some companies in the service of France, a regiment in that of Holland, and some companies in the service of the king of Sardinia. The king of France pays annually for a regiment of fusiliers, consisting of 1292 men, L. 20,348. The colonel receives about L. 840 *per ann*; a captain L. 360: and a common soldier L. 7. The pay of a regiment of twelve companies, in the Dutch service, is L. 25,377.

LETTER 9.

Ecclesiastical affairs — State of Literature — Learned Men of Zurich — Society of Physics — Seminaries — Libraries.

IN ecclesiastical affairs the Senate is supreme: the canton is divided into fourteen districts, each governed by a dean, chosen by the synod, from three candidates proposed by the clergy of the diocese. The synod composed of the whole clergy, and several assessors on the part of the Little Council, meets twice a year. In the

last century it had a more democratical form, and exercised jurisdiction over its members: it examined causes between ecclesiastics, and between the ministers and their parishioners; gave decisions; enjoyed the power of imprisoning, deposing, and reinstating the ministers; and exercised an authority dangerous to the state. By degrees their exorbitant prerogatives were annulled; and, in 1700, the clergy of Zurich succeeded in the establishment of a more aristocratical form.

The principal ministers and professors in the town constitute, in conjunction with several magistrates and other assessors deputed by the civil power, an ecclesiastical and academical council: to this committee the deans have recourse, in all concerns which seem to exceed their jurisdiction: it determines lesser affairs, and refers cases of importance to the Senate.

The fourteen deans assemble twice a year in Zurich, and compose a *prosynode*; in which they depute one of their own body to deliver their requisitions, or *pia desideria*, first to the Ecclesiastical Council, and afterwards to the General Synod. The Ecclesiastical Council takes their requests into deliberation, lays them before the Synod, and if recommended, they are presented by the assessors to the final decision of the Senate.

The ecclesiastical benefices in this canton are extremely moderate. The best living may be worth L. 140 *per ann.* and the worst about L. 30. The salary of the canonries in the capital amount to L. 120. In general, a clergyman of the town, who has merit, is certain of obtaining a professorship, which adds L. 50 or L. 60. *per ann.* to his other appointments.

The charitable establishments at Zurich, are the orphan-house ⁴, which is regulated with extreme attention and care; an alms-house for poor burghers; an hospital for incurables, and that for the sick of all nations, which usually contains between six or seven hundred patients; and the *Almosen-Amt*, or foundation for the poor: this excellent institution puts out children as apprentices; and distributes money, clothes, and books of devotion to poor persons, as well in the town as in different parts of the canton, at the recommendation of the respective ministers. In 1697 it distributed L. 300; in 1760, L. 5010; in 1770, L. 4796; and in 1778, L. 5451.

Among the particular institutions must not be omitted the chirurgical seminary: it is formed by voluntary subscriptions, and chiefly supported by Dr. Rhan, an eminent physician, who reads lectures gratis, and gives the profits of a publication, called the *Magazine of Health*, towards maintaining this seminary, for the instruction of young physicians and surgeons, destined to settle in the country.

⁴ The orphanhouse is a noble foundation, and the enlightened sentiments of humanity which planned and directs it are highly deserving our admiration. It is a large and commodious building, situated in a healthy part of the city; the bedrooms are furnished with iron bedsteads; the cellars are very large, and proper for the reception of a great quantity of wine, whenever the trustees shall be disposed to make a speculation in that article for the benefit of the house. The children admitted to this hospital are educated, instructed, and employed under proper regulations; and so well supplied with all necessaries and conveniencies of life, that people in easy circumstances wish to have their children brought up in it. R.

At Zurich public education is a matter of state, and under the immediate protection of Government. The office of a professor gives rank and estimation, and is often held by a member of the Senate and of the Great Council. The principal literary establishments for the instruction of youth are, the Caroline College for students in divinity; *Collegium Humanitatis*, or the college for polite literature; and the school of arts; the first has twelve professors, the second two, and the last seven. The learned languages, divinity, natural history, mathematics, and in short every species of polite learning, as well as abstruse science, is taught at a small expense in these respective seminaries.

In consequence of the unremitted attention which, since the reformation, government has paid to the education of youth, many eminent persons have flourished in all branches of literature; and there is no town in Switzerland, where letters are more encouraged, or where they have been cultivated with greater success. A learned professor of Zurich has, in a very interesting publication, displayed the important services which erudition and science have derived from the labors of his countrymen. In these biographical memoirs appear, among many others, the names of Zuingle and Bullinger, Conrad Gessner, Hottinger, Simler, Spon, Scheuchzer, Heydegger, Breitinger, Bodmer, Hirtzel, and Solomon Gessner.

Of all the luminaries which Zurich, fertile in great geniuses, has ever produced, Conrad Gessner perhaps occupies the first place. He was born at Zurich in 1516, and died in 1564, in the 48th

year of his age. Those who are conversant with the works of this great scholar and naturalist, cannot repress their wonder and admiration at the amplitude of his knowledge in every species of erudition, and the variety of his discoveries in natural history, which was his peculiar delight. Their wonder and admiration is still further augmented, when they consider the gross ignorance of the age which he helped to enlighten, and the scanty succours he possessed to aid him in thus extending the bounds of knowledge; that he composed his works, and made those discoveries which would have done honor to the most enlightened period, under the complicated evils of poverty, sickness, and domestic uneasiness. A detail of his life and writings, by an author capable of appreciating his multifarious knowledge, would be a just tribute to the merits of this prodigy of learning (*Monstrum Eruditionis*) as he is emphatically styled by Boerhaave.

Bodmer, born in 1698, was alive in 1776, when I first visited Switzerland; but I was at that time ignorant of the German language, and unacquainted with his great merits in reforming the taste of his contemporaries, and familiarizing them to the sublime beauties of Homer and Milton. He died in 1783. I now regret that I did not cultivate the acquaintance of a man, whom the unanimous voice of his contemporaries deservedly style the Father of German literature; whose just criticisms and correct judgment animated the poetical genius of Klopstock, Haller, and Gessner.

I did not, however, omit waiting upon Solomon Gessner, the celebrated author of the *Death of Abel*, and of several idyls, which for their

delicate and elegant simplicity are justly esteemed. They abound with those nice touches of exquisite sensibility, which discover a mind warmed with the finest sentiments; and love is represented in the chastest coloring of innocence, virtue, and benevolence. Nor has he confined his subjects merely to the tender passion: paternal affection, and filial reverence; gratitude, humanity, in short every moral duty is exhibited and inculcated in the most pleasing and affecting manner. He has for some time renounced poetry in order to assume the pencil; and painting is at present his favorite amusement. A treatise which he has published on landscapes, discovers the elegance of his taste, and the versatility of his genius; while his compositions in both kinds prove the resemblance of the two arts; and that the conceptions of the poet and of the painter are congenial. His drawings in black and white are preferable to his paintings; for, although the ideas in both are equally beautiful or sublime, the coloring is inferior to the design. He has published a handsome edition of his writings in quarto, in which every part of the work is carried on by himself: he prints them at his own press; and is at once both the drawer and engraver of the plates. It is to be lamented that he has renounced poetry; for, while ordinary writers spring up in great plenty; authors of real genius are rare and uncommon. His drawings are seen only by a few: but his writings are dispersed abroad, translated into every language, and will be admired by future ages, as long as there remains a relish for true pastoral simplicity, or taste for original composition. He is plain in his manners; open, affable, and obliging in his

addresses; and of singular modesty^s. Gessner died of an apoplexy, March 2d, 1788.

I called also on Mr. Lavater, a clergyman of Zurich, and celebrated physiognomist, who has published four large volumes in quarto on that fanciful subject. That particular passions have a certain effect upon particular features, is evident to the most common observer; and it may be conceived, that an habitual indulgence of these passions may possibly, in some cases, impress a distinguishing mark on the countenance: but that a certain cast of features constantly denotes certain passions; and that by contemplating the countenance, we can infallibly discover also the mental qualities, is an hypothesis liable to so many exceptions, as renders it impossible to establish a general and uniform system. Nevertheless Mr. Lavater, like a true enthusiast, carries his theory much farther: for he not only pretends to discover the characters and passions by the features, by the complexion, by the form of the head, and by the motion of the arms; but he also draws some inferences of the same kind even from the hand-writing. And indeed his system is founded upon such universal principles, that he applies the same rules to all animated nature, extending them not only to brutes, but even to insects. That the temper of a horse may be discovered by his countenance, will not perhaps strike you as absurd: but did you ever hear before, that any quality could be inferred from the physiognomy

^s Simplicity, candor and the gentle virtues ever attending true genius are so conspicuous in Mr. Gessner, that they render him a fit pattern for young poets. Extravagance is the characteristic of fools. RAMOND.

of a bee, an ant, or a cockchafer⁶? While I give my opinion thus freely concerning Mr. Lavater's notions, you will readily perceive that I am not one of those who are initiated into the mysteries of his art.

Mr. Lavater has not merely confined himself to physiognomy. He has composed sacred hymns and national songs, which are much esteemed for their simplicity. He has also given to the public numerous works on sacred subjects. I am concerned to add, that the ingenious author extends to religion the same enthusiasm which he has employed in his researches on physiognomy, and in his poetical compositions: the warmth of his imagination hurries him on to adopt whatever is most fanciful and extraordinary; to outstep the limits of sober reason; to be an advocate for the efficacy of absolute faith; for inward illuminations; for supernatural visions; and for the miraculous effects of what is called *animal magnetism* in the cure of disorders.

⁶ There is little reflection in the reasoning of Mr. Coxe, he allows too much to have a right to dispute what he does not admit; such an easy and superficial way of arguing is rather popular and common; to divide two inseparable things, agreeing to one, in order to contest the other, hath indeed an air of impartiality, but proves, in my opinion, either an incapacity or a backwardness to investigate the matter fully. To be consistent in the latter part of his objection Mr. Coxe should have said: *There is no absurdity in saying, that we can discern the temper of a horse in its countenance; but no body has yet pretended that he could distinguish something in the physiognomy of a bee; and Mr. Lavater would have answered him: it is neither the fault of nature, nor that of my principles if you do not see, but do not conclude thence that a thing is not, say rather that you do not see it, and I will help you to see.* RAMOND.

The insinuating address of Mr. Lavater, the vivacity of his conversation, the amenity of his manners, together with the singularity and animation of his style, have contributed more to diffuse his system and principles, than sound arguments or deep learning, which are not to be found in his lively, but desultory compositions⁷.

Among the eminent men of Zurich, must not be omitted Dr. Hirtzel, a learned physician, who is deservedly styled the Swiss Plutarch, and has, among various publications, more particularly distinguished himself by the *Socrate Rustique*, and by the lives of Sultzer and Heydegger.

Leonhard Meister, professor of history and morality in the School of Arts, deserves to be mentioned among the learned men of Zurich. The versatility of his talents will be collected from a bare catalogue of his principal works: which are written in the German tongue. — On Fanaticism; the History of the German Language and Literature; Lives of the celebrated men of Zurich;

⁷ I have seen many eminent men, but in their conversation and commerce they fell all very short of what the celebrity of their names made me expect. Mr. Lavater, whose ardent imagination and exquisite sensibility are perhaps unequalled, alone surpassed my expectation; he persuades, he wins: his language, is plain and popular, but so persuasive that it is impossible to withstand his words. His manners are graceful by their artlessness and simplicity, and seducing by the propriety of his gestures. Under an irregular figure he seems to hide an enlarged soul, which is seen as through a veil; his lively and open look impresses the mind with fear and confidence. I saw him in his study, busy, and disengaged; and always found him plain, great and interesting. The critics of his work will, upon hearing him, see their doubts vanish; and one cannot be his friend without becoming his disciple. RAMOND.

Swiss Biography; the most memorable Events of the Helvetic History, in Chronological Order; Instances of Intolerance and Fanaticism in Switzerland; Public Law of Switzerland; History of the Town and Canton of Zurich; Panegyric on Bodmer; Excursions through various Parts of Switzerland; Character of the German Poets, in Chronological Order, with their Portraits; Abridgment of Ancient History, particularly of the Greeks, with an introduction on the Fine Arts and Polite Literature. In all his writings the judicious author has displayed great zeal for the promotion of learning, correctness of taste, liberality of sentiment, and much historical and biographical knowledge. But in his observations on fanaticism and intolerance, he has treated those subjects in a new light: he has illustrated their dreadful effects on government and civil society by historical events, and in a political view; he has appealed from theory to experience, and exemplified questionable arguments by unanswerable facts. In this instance he has been no less singularly useful in combating persecution, than in repressing that spirit of fanaticism that prevailed among many of his countrymen, and which is diffused by men of lively abilities and popular manners.

The curiosity of the naturalist will be amply gratified by a view of the library and cabinet of Mr. John Gessner, professor of physics, and canon of the cathedral, who inherits the zeal for natural history which characterized his great ancestor Conrad Gessner. His proficiency in the study of nature, and particularly his accurate skill in botany, has been abundantly testified by the repeated acknowledgments of Haller, whom he

accompanied in his herborizing excursions through the mountains of Switzerland, and who confesses himself indebted to Mr. Gessner for various observations and important discoveries. Mr. Gessner's cabinet is extremely rich in fossils, and remarkable for the drawings of the principal specimens in this museum; and for numerous representations of insects admirably painted by Schellenberg. But one of the most curious parts of his collection, is a great botanical work, which Haller calls *vastissimum et pulcherrimum opus*; and which, it is much to be regretted, he has hitherto withheld from the public. He has exhibited, in eighty tables, a thousand generical characters of plants, according to the Linnæan system, together with many of the specific characters. These tables, intended to illustrate a general history of plants, which, as appears by his own letters to Haller, the author meditated, were drawn and engraved by Geisler, the same person who distinguished himself by painting the shells of Regensfuss⁸.

Amidst the various occupations of Gessner, botany, to which he had an early and strong attachment, has engaged a great share of his attention; besides two or three early productions in this line, he began, in the year 1759, to publish a work which he has extended to eight publications, in the quarto form.

The first seven parts bear the title of *Phytographia Sacra Generalis*; the remaining that of *Phytographia Sacra Specialis*. In this work the author treats on philosophy, of vegetation in general,

⁸ See Coxe's Travels into Poland, &c. Book viii. chap. iv.

general, and on the circulation of the sap through the particular parts of plants; on the Linnæan system against the objections of Alston; on the uses of plants as food to man, and gives a detail of upwards of a hundred edible kinds, with a compendious account of the specific properties of each; on the medicinal uses of plants; on the various œconomical uses of vegetables, illustrating in a particular manner, among many others, those of the Palm-tree, Flax, and Aloes.

In the latter volumes of this work, the author treats on other advantages derived to mankind from the vegetable world. He speaks, for instance, on the nature and constituent parts of turf and peat, and enumerates the species of bog and fen plants which enter into the composition of each; on the kinds of shrubs proper for hedges; on timber for building, and particularly such as were used for those purposes by the ancients.

In the first part, which is all that is hitherto published, of what he names *Phytographia Sacra Specialis*, he has given an account of those authors who have written on the plants of the holy scriptures, and enters upon the history of each.

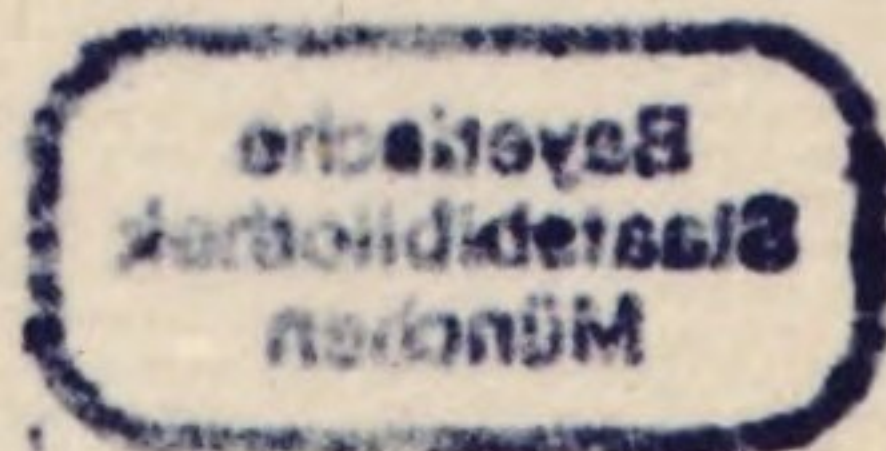
The Society of Physics owes its origin to Messrs. Heydegger, Schultetz, and John Gessner, who first assembled in 1745, and admitted others, in order to attend a course of lectures on natural history. This course was read by Mr. John Gessner, professor of physics, who so greatly excited the attention, and animated the zeal of his audience, that in a short space of time the members were increased to seventy. The first regular meeting was held in 1745, in a private house; and in a few years they deserved and received the protection of



government, which granted the profits of a lottery towards establishing a fund. There are now about a hundred and twelve members: each pays on his admittance eight florins, or about seventeen shillings, and the same sum annually. Since 1757, a suit of apartments, in a house belonging to one of the tribes, has been assigned for holding their assemblies, and for containing their library and apparatus.

The society is divided into five departments. 1. Physics. 2. Mathematics. 3. Natural history. 4. Medicine. 5. Application of physics to arts and trade. But the grand and principal object of this society, is the encouragement and improvement of practical agriculture. For this purpose the members correspond with the landholders in different parts of the canton; visit various districts in rotation; summon to Zurich some of the best informed farmers; acquaint themselves with the state of husbandry; give them instructions; offer prizes for improvements in cultivation; furnish small sums of money to the poorer peasants: and communicate to the public the result of their inquiries and observations.

The public library at Zurich contains about 25,000 volumes, and a few curious manuscripts. Among the latter, the following principally attracted my attention. 1. The original manuscript of Quintilian, found in the library of St. Gallen, and from which the first edition of that great rhetorician was printed. 2. The psalms in the Greek tongue, written on parchment dyed of a violet color. The letters are silver, excepting the initials, which are in golden characters, and the marginal references, which are red. It is similar to the celebrated *Codex*



Argenteus ⁹ in the library of Upsala. It is supposed to have once formed part of the *Codex Vaticanus*, preserved in the Vatican library at Rome: as both of these manuscripts are similar, and the Roman volume is deficient in the psalms. The learned Breitinger has published a dissertation on this codex ¹. 3. Several manuscripts of Zuingli, which prove the indefatigable industry of that celebrated reformer. Among these I particularly noticed his Latin Commentary on Genesis and Isaiah, and a copy of St. Paul's Epistles from the Greek Testament published by Erasmus. At the end is written an inscription in the Greek tongue, signifying, "Copied by Ulric Zuingli, 1415." It was presented to the public library by Ann Zuingli, the last survivor of his illustrious race. 4. Three Latin letters from Lady Jane Grey to Bullinger, in 1551, 1552, and 1553. These letters, written with her own hand, breathe a spirit of the most unaffected piety, and prove the extraordinary progress which this unfortunate and accomplished princess, though only in the sixteenth year of her age, had made in various branches of literature. The Greek and Hebrew quotations show that she was well acquainted with those languages. These letters, though given in several publications, yet are not printed with that accuracy, which the relics of such a personage deserve.

This library is rich in the best editions of the classics; and particularly in the early impressions of the 15th century.

⁹ See Travels into Poland, Russia. &c. Book vii. chap. vi.

¹ De Antiquissimo Turicensis Bibliothecæ Græco Psalmorum Libro, Turici. 1748.

The library of the cathedral belonging to the Caroline College, contains several manuscripts of the reformers Bullinger, Pelican, Bibliander, and Leon Juda; particularly the translation of the Talmud by Pelican and Bibliander, which has never been printed; also sixty volumes of letters from Zuingli and the early reformers, with a complete index. This collection, so interesting to ecclesiastical history, was formed by Henry Hottinger², the learned author of the History of the Reformation, renowned for his extensive erudition, and particularly for his profound skill in oriental literature. The librarian pointed out an ancient manuscript of the Latin Vulgate, called *Codex Carolinus*, and supposed to have been a present from Charlemain; but without foundation, for it is certainly of much later date, probably of the eleventh century. Among the rare books is the Latin Bible, translated by Pelican, Bibliander, and Leon Juda, printed at Zurich in 1545.

The lover of literary and ecclesiastical history will not fail to visit the Reverend Mr. Simler's ample collection of letters and documents between Zuingli and the other reformers of Zurich, and their correspondents in different parts of Europe. The learned professor proposed to have printed by subscription, in two volumes in folio, the letters of the English reformers, several of which Burnet has published in his History of Reformation, but with many errors. Not finding, however, sufficient subscribers for so expensive a publication, he was obliged to relinquish his plan, to the regret of all lovers of biography.

² He was born in 1620; and was drowned in the Limmat. 1667.

The library of Mr. de Heydegger, senator of Zurich, deserves the notice of the learned traveller. The ingenious possessor inherited from his father only 3000 volumes, which he has extended to 15,000. His principal aim is directed to those books that were unknown to Maittaire, which might assist in correcting his typographical annals, and in forming an accurate and connected history of printing. In this collection are found many rare and elegant impressions by the Alduses, Juntas, Giolitos, Torzentino, Stephens, Elzivers, Comino, Tonson, Wetstein, Baskerville, Bodoni, Barbou, and Didot. It is particularly rich in the earliest impressions, of which there are no less than seven hundred that were printed in the fifteenth century.

Among many rare books, I noted down the following: — *Ciceronis Officia*. Fust & Schæffer 1465. pet. in folio. — *Jo. Sanuensis Catholicon*, folio. Aug. Vindel. Gunther, Zeiner & Reutlingen, 1469. — First edition of *Petrarca*, Venet. Vindel. de Spira, 1470. See *Cat. de la Valliere*, 1783. No. 3579. — First edition of *Dante*, *C. Fulginei Neumeister* 1472. See *la Valliere* No. 3558 — *Boccacio Genealogia Deorum & liber de Montibus & Sylvis*. Venet. Vindel. de Spira, 1472 and 1473. First edition. — *De Claris Mulieribus*. Ulma. Sv. Zeiner, 1474. First edition, with wooden cuts, very singular. See *Catalogue de la Valliere*, No. 3810 and 5609. — *Boccacio Decamerone*, Venet. Gio. & Gregor. de Gregorii fratelli, 1492, folio, wooden cuts. The *Decameron* translated into German about 1475, folio. — *Mamontreclus Beronæ p. Helian Helixæ*, 1470, folio. This book was printed at Munster, in the canton of Lucerne, and is curious, because it is the first instance of typography in Switzerland.

The French translator's observations on the city of Zurich.

The canton of Zurich holds the first rank in the Helvetic league; and the enthusiasm for liberty which brought about the revolution in Switzerland and crowned the efforts of the deliverers of their country with success, is no where so fiery. Simplicity of manners, republican sincerity, and national pride are the characteristics of the community as well as of the individuals. The moral state of this canton is as interesting as its civil constitution is respectable; and the interior of their families affords an affecting spectacle to the curious observer; conjugal affection is enforced here by love rather than by law or habit; and filial piety resembles that blind respect which in the patriarchal times was the virtue of children; a reverend regard for the memory of the dead recalls them ever to the remembrance of the living; I have seen in many houses the portraits of the deceased members of the family represented on their death-bed, the eyes closed, and seeming to utter their last words. These sad images which would scare a squeamish Frenchman who is carefully avoiding every thing that might affect his heart too violently, are consoling objects for men capable of relishing the sweets of love without fearing its pangs.

The two sexes have here as little intercourse with one another as in most towns of Switzerland and Germany; each following its natural inclination and taste. I happened to see ten women assembled in a circle to forget in innocent amusements their domestic cares, whilst their fathers, brothers and husbands met somewhere else either for a walk or for some other diversion.

The young men of Zurich love military exercises and form a body of national militia, in which the first citizens of the canton are proud to serve as privates. This corps marches often out of town to practise their motions and evolutions with the exactness and subordination of the best disciplined troops.

The city of *Zuric* has ever been the friend and ally of that of *Strasburgh*; and the inhabitants of both towns were formerly closely united; their history furnishes interesting and singular instances of this intimacy. The youth of *Zuric* being, toward the close of the sixteenth century, informed that the archers of *Strasburgh* were going to celebrate their feast, seventeen of them agreed to surprise their friends in *Alsace*, and to bring a warm pap for their dish to the entertainment. The distance between the two towns is about fifty leagues. Taking boat on the *Limmat*, and placing their pap, which they had put in a huge pot surrounded with straw, that it might not cool, in the middle, they rowed off, under a music of martial instruments, on a river whose dreadful rapidity precludes the use of any thing else but the helm; soon after they entered the *Aar* which carried them into the Rhine, and the pap was still smoking when they arrived. Chronicles record few instances of such a wild navigation and of such an odd proof of friendship. This singular expedition has been commended in a poem which is now become very scarce.

Among the many learned men whose names illustrate the city of *Zuric* the first place is certainly due to that veteran in the fields of literature the respectable *Bodmer*, the Nestor of Switzerland, and the patriarch of German literature. He it was who revived in Germany a taste for the study of the ancients, particularly of the Greeks, and taught his countrymen to imitate them. All branches of learning are equally beholden to him; and he is as much known by the different careers he opened and the young champions whom he called into the field, as by the merit of his own works. To him Germany owes her immortal *Klopstock*, whom he fostered and brought into notice. I beheld with tender respect this venerable old man, who at the age of eighty possesses still the fire and gaiety of his youth, earning the reward of his virtues, counting all his fellow-citizens among his friends, and the illustrious men of his nation among his disciples. His likeness to *Voltaire* is very striking, and I have been told that all those that had seen

them both were surpris'd at it. He has the same cast of the face, and the same gestures; the color of his eyes alone differs a little, and his whole countenance is somewhat more delicate. Upon my mentioning to him this striking similitude, he made me the following very modest and remarkable answer: *Nothing would be wanting to my glory if I resembled in every thing Mr. de Voltaire; but he were perhaps happier if he resembled me more.* This respectable old man to whom I was introduced by his nephew, Mr. Escher, my worthy friend, received me with much kindness, and presented me with an elegant copy of a collection of love-verses of the German poets of the thirteenth century. This work is extracted from a manuscript which the king of France lent to the city of Zurich in 1752. Mr. Bodmer gave me also the collection of his historical and political tragedies, a learned and interesting work, which proves that kind of writing excellent, although the president Henaut mis-carried in it.

LETTER 10.

Expedition along the Borders of the Lake of Zurich — Rychterschwyl — Isle of Ufnau — Rapperschwyl — Grunengen — Ustar — Greiffensee — Excursion to Regensberg, and to the Summit of the Lagerberg.

DURING my first tour through Switzerland, I passed too short a time at Zurich to have an opportunity of visiting its delightful environs, which, for the mild beauties of nature, for the numerous population, and the well-being of the peasantry, is scarcely surpassed by any spot on the globe. Having, on subsequent occasions, resided longer

at Zurich, I did not omit making several excursions into various parts of the canton; an account of which will form the subject of the present letter.

The weather clearing up after several continued and heavy rains, on the 24th of June, 1785, I accompanied Mr. de Bonstet of Berne, Professor Meister, and some other gentlemen of Zurich, in a delightful tour round the lake. We had no need of guides, as the country was well known to my companions; and we had no encumbrance of baggage. Having made an early dinner, according to the custom of the place, we departed at mid-day; and walked about three miles, through vineyards and cornfields, to Kuffnach, a small village on the east side of the lake. Here we paid a visit to a gentleman, and were served with tea, slices of bread and butter, and cherries.

In 1778, Kuffnach was considerably damaged by the rise of a small torrent, which poured down from the mountains, carried away twenty-five houses, and destroyed about sixty persons. This torrent, now only a little rill, swelled to such a degree, as to rise at least thirty feet above its usual level: an increase owing to the sudden melting of the snow on the neighbouring heights. Every assistance was instantly afforded to the wretched inhabitants, and a collection of L. 3000 was raised in one Sunday at the different churches of Zurich; an astonishing collection for a town which does not contain 11,000 souls.

I am indebted to Professor Meister for the following observations on the population, industry, and productions of Kuffnach, and the neighbouring villages.

Kuffnach contains about 1700 souls, and the neighbouring villages are no less peopled: this astonishing population in so small a compass is occasioned by the trade of the capital, which employs so many hands. The proportion between the produce of the soil and the profits derived from working for the manufactures, may be estimated from the following calculation: Five parishes and two villages, situated near the lakes of Zurich and Greiffen, contain 8498 souls; and comprehend only 6050 acres³ of arable land, 698 of vines, and 3407 of pasture, or scarcely an acre and a quarter for each person. Their subsistence is principally supplied by 2016 looms, by means of which they prepare silk and cotton for the merchants of Zurich. In these parts an acre is sold for *L.* 100 or *L.* 120; whereas the same quantity in the interior part of the canton is worth only *L.* 20 or *L.* 30.

In sixteen parishes, situated on the borders of the lake, the number of inhabitants, in 1784, were 32,581. There were 271 marriages, 1135 births. The proportion of the marriages to the births, as 1000 to 4188; of the births to the deaths, as 1000 to 882; of the births to the living, as 1000 to 18,705; of the deaths to the living, as 2000 to 32,515; of the males to the females, as 1000 to 1097.

Having reposed ourselves about an hour at Kuffnach, we continued our walk through vineyards and corn-fields, sometimes on the sloping banks of the lake, sometimes on a small footpath formed on terraces upon a level with the water; or along narrow roads that resemble gravel-walks winding through pleasure-grounds and parks in England.

³ The acre used in this letter contains from 32,600 to 36,000 square feet.

We enjoyed, during great part of the way, the most agreeable shade from large beech and oak, walnut and other fruit-trees, that overhang like weeping willows; many of which are planted almost horizontally, either stretching from the sides of the hill, or from the very edge of the water, their boughs dipping into the lake: the scattered cottages, the numerous villages, the picturesque villas placed on the banks of the lake, and several neat churches, added to the beauty of the ever-changing scenery.

Having walked about three miles further, we stopped at a peasant's house in Meile, who regaled us with our usual fare, milk and cherries, but would receive no recompence. Here we embarked and crossed the lake, enjoying a most agreeable view of each border studded with villas, churches, and villages, many of which look like large towns, as they were half concealed by the intervening trees. As we passed near a bold promontory, richly covered with wood, we observed the sun, which was hid under a cloud, gilding the distant town of Rapperschwyl, the hills towards Zurich silvered by a milder ray, and the gloomy but sublime mountains of Glaris boldly rising to the south.

We landed at Weddenschweil, which is agreeably situated on the west side of the lake. It is the capital of a bailliage, that stretches to the limits of the cantons of Zug and Schweitz, and was formerly an independent lordship. In 1287 it was sold by Rhodolph of Weddenschweil to the knights of Jerusalem; and became a commandery until 1459, when Zurich purchased it from the master of that order for 20,000 florins. The inhabitants having revolted in 1466, and being compelled to submit,

were deprived of several privileges, and particularly the criminal jurisdiction, which was transferred to the senate of Zurich. Notwithstanding, however, the loss of these immunities, the mildness of government is sufficiently manifested, by the considerable increase of the population within this last century. The number of souls, which in 1678 consisted of only 4867, amounted in 1782 to 8188.

Near Weddenschweil I observed a beautiful meadow, prettily skirted with wood, and fertilized by a lively stream, which tempted me to quit the road. I had scarcely proceeded fifty paces, before I saw a silver rill gushing from the crevice of a rock sprinkled with wood. As we were contemplating this pleasing landscape, we heard the noise of falling waters, and caught a glimpse of a torrent tumbling from an elevated rock, glistening through the dark foliage, and richly illuminated by the rays of the sun, which was concealed from our view. Having penetrated by the side of the torrent, we saw it bursting from the height, amid surrounding trees, fall about six feet upon a ridge, and then roll fifty feet in mid air, without touching the sides of the precipice. The effect was peculiarly striking. Nor could we sufficiently admire the amphitheatre of rock, the beeches suspended on its top and sides, the beams of the sun darting on the falling waters, and the noise of the torrent contrasting with the mild and tranquil beauties of the lake we had just quitted.

Our walk to Richliswick, where we passed the night, was no less agreeable than that on the other side of the lake. The road ran sometimes through meadows, at a little distance from the

lake, sometimes close to the water, under the shade of trees planted casually by the hand of nature, in the most capricious shapes: we scarcely advanced a hundred steps without passing a neat cottage, and meeting with peasants, who saluted us as we went along. Every spot of ground is cultivated in the highest perfection.

At Richliswick, which like Weddenschweil contains many good houses of stone, plaistered and white-washed, ornamented with green window-shutters, and Venetian blinds, we found an inn with comfortable accommodations. This place has a good port; is the passage of much merchandize; and is greatly resorted to by the pilgrims, in their way to Einsidlin.

Early the next morning we embarked, and sailed to the Isle of Ufnau. The weather was uncommonly fine, the lake was quite still, the reflection of the white houses quivered on the surface of the water; and the hollows of the distant mountains seemed to be filled with a transparent vapor, which induced me to cry out, in the language of poetry,

“ Pleasant the sun,
 “ When first on this delightful land he spreads
 “ His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
 “ Glist’ring with dew ⁴.”

About a mile from Richliswick is a single house standing on a gentle acclivity, the walls of which divide the canton of Zurich from that of Schweitz, and at the same time set instant bounds to that industry and population which had hitherto attracted our wonder and delight.

⁴ Milton’s Paradise Lost.

In about two hours we landed at Ufnau, a pleasant island, about an English mile in circumference, belonging to the abbey of Einsiedlin. It has only a single house, inhabited by a peasant's family, two barns, a kind of tower or summer-house, seated on the highest point, a chapel which is never used, and a church in which mass is said only twice in the year. Within is the tomb of St. Alderic, who built an hermitage on the island, to which he retired. He died in 1473, and must have been highly revered for his supposed sanctity; as a Latin inscription informs us, that "he was fed with bread from heaven, and "walked upon the surface of the waters."

This island is sometimes called Hutten's island, in memory of that extraordinary person, who retired and died in this obscure spot.

Hutten, descended from an illustrious family, was born at Seckenberg in Franconia, and receiving an education suitable to his birth, prosecuted his studies with that impetuous zeal which was the leading mark of his character. He passed a life of almost unparalleled vicissitude; sometimes in the camp, signalized for personal courage; sometimes in universities, where he distinguished himself by various publications; sometimes in courts, received with respect, or driven away for insolence; and sometimes wandering over different parts of Europe in extreme indigence. Having, at an early period of his life embraced the opinions of Luther, he drew both his pen and his sword in defence of the new doctrines; was so intemperate in his ardor, that he was frequently imprisoned; and alarmed even the daring spirit of Luther by his repeated outrages. Having rendered

himself an equal object of terror to both Lutherans and Catholics, his overbearing temper in vain sought an asylum, until he found it in this sequestered island. He expired in 1523, in the 36th year of his age: a man as remarkable for his genius and learning, as for his turbulence and presumption.

The island is agreeably broken into hill and dale; is extremely fertile in pasture; produces hemp, flax, a few vines, and a small tufted wood, which overhangs the edge of the water. It is the only island in the lake of Zurich, except an uninhabited rock, which yields a small quantity of hay.

Having reimbarked, we soon landed at Rapperschwyl, which I have described in a preceding letter; and continued ascending amid hanging enclosures of pasture and corn, commanding a fine view of the lake, hills, mountains, and alps. Having passed the little territory belonging to Rapperschwyl, we came into the canton of Zurich. On entering a neat cottage, to inquire the road, we saw a peasant teaching about thirty children to read and write. On expressing my surprise and satisfaction, I was informed that each village has a peasant schoolmaster, either entirely or partly paid by government; and that in this canton there is scarcely a child who is not instructed in reading and writing. A little further we entered another cottage, where the mistress of the house offered us milk and cherries, and placed upon the table nine or ten large silver spoons.

We continued our walk through an enclosed, hilly, and well-wooded country, and arrived about mid-day at Grunengen, a small burgh,

capital of the bailliage. After dinner we paid a visit to the bailif, who resides in the castle, which stands on an elevated rock, overlooking an extensive prospect; towards the south wild and romantic, towards the west rich and well cultivated, watered by a lively stream which flows from the lake of Pfeffikon.

The bailif possesses considerable authority. He judges civil and criminal affairs, in the presence of certain jurymen and the under-bailif; but can pass sentence without their concurrence, as neither of them enjoys a vote. He can punish all crimes which are not capital; can order whipping, or even the torture to be inflicted, when the criminal is convicted, and will not confess; and I was greatly shocked to find that this horrid expedient had been lately practised. Even in capital cases he can condemn to death, provided he summons eighty jurymen from the different districts to be present at the trial; but as this custom is attended with much expense, he usually remits the felon to Zurich. In civil proceedings an appeal lies from his decision to the senate of Zurich.

If the bailif abuses his power, the senate readily listens to the complaints of the oppressed inhabitants, and would not fail to punish the unjust judge. An instance of this impartiality occurred in 1754, when the bailif being proved guilty of extortions, though he was son-in-law to the burgomaster, was fined and banished from Switzerland. I learned this fact, on observing a vacant place in the series of coats of arms belonging to the several bailifs, which are painted in the hall of the castle; the arms of the extortioner, which

which once filled this vacant place, had been erased by order of government.

From Grunengen we pursued our course through lanes, fields, and enclosures, along a most delightful country, abounding in vines, corn, pasture, and wood. As the setting sun gradually descended below the horizon, we frequently looked back upon the distant alps, whose lower parts were dusky and gloomy; and whose summits were

*“ Arrayed with reflected purple and gold,
“ And colors dipt in heav’n’s.”*

At the close of the evening I arrived at Ustar; regretting that our day’s journey was concluded, and not feeling in the least fatigued with a walk of eighteen miles, from Rapperschwyl to Ustar; so greatly had I been occupied and delighted with the beauties of this romantic country.

Ustar is a large parish, containing 3000 souls; the wooden cottages are neat and commodious, resemble those in the canton of Appenzel, and are dispersed in the same manner over the hills and dales.

The sun had scarcely risen before we quitted our beds, and walked to the castle of Ustar. It stands boldly on an elevated rock, planted to its very summit with vines, and commands a most extensive view, bounded by the Jura, the mountains of the Black Forest, and the chain of alps stretching from the canton of Appenzel to the confines of the Vallais. Below and around, the country resembled the most cultivated and

5 Milton.

enclosed parts of England; a small lively stream winded through an immense plain; while the lake of Greiffen appeared like a broad river, washing the bottom of the adjacent hills.

This castle was formerly the residence of the counts of Ustar, who held it and the district as a fief from the counts of Ravensburgh, and was at that time a strong fortress. On the extinction of that house, in the middle of the fourteenth century, it was transferred to the family of de Bonstet; and in 1552 was purchased by Zurich, and united to the bailliage of Greiffensee.

M. de Bonstet, whom I have mentioned as one of our party, derived great satisfaction in tracing the antiquity and history of this seat, formerly possessed by his ancestors, and in observing the family arms painted upon the glass windows. This castle is now a private gentleman's house, and belongs to Mr. Teyler of Weddenschweil.

From Ustar we crossed the fields, and arrived at the lake of Greiffen. We walked for some way upon the turf, along its borders, under the pendulous branches of oak, beech, and elms. This lake is of an oblong shape, about six miles long, and a mile broad. On one side the shores are flat, or gently rising, on the other, hills richly wooded. The dearth of cottages and inhabitants, in this delightful but solitary spot, formed a striking contrast with the numerous villages we had recently quitted; while the southern extremity of the lake seemed almost bounded by that magnificent chain of alps, which constantly engaged our attention.

Having embarked in a small boat, we passed the village of Greiffen, pleasingly situated on a small promontory imbosomed in a wood, and

landed at the northern extremity of the lake. Here I bathed, and walked on gently, ascending through fertile grounds, delightfully planted with oak, beech, and poplars, and innumerable fruit-trees. At a small village we stopped at the parsonage. You can scarcely form to yourself an adequate idea of the neatness and simplicity which reign in these parts. The clergyman's two daughters, about fifteen or sixteen years of age, politely brought milk and cherries for our refreshment. They were neatly dressed, like the peasant girls, in straw hats, their shift-sleeves tied, as is the custom of the country, above their elbows.

From this retreat of innocence and simplicity we ascended about a mile, then burst upon a charming view of Zurich, the lake, and environs; and, gently descending, arrived at Zurich, quite enchanted with this short expedition.

An expedition to the summit of the Lagerberg was no less agreeable than the former excursion. I procured a guide and a horse; but the weather proving very fine, I gave the horse to my servant, and preferred walking across the cornfields, meadows, and thickets. The fields were enlivened by the numerous persons employed in harvest. In these parts, as well as the neighbouring countries, I observed with pleasure, that the oxen, which are chiefly used for draught, are not yoked to the teams or ploughs, but harnessed like horses. This custom enables those animals to perform their labor with much more ease, and with greater effect. It has lately been introduced into some parts of England; and all unprejudiced farmers allow its superior advantage, as the yoke is extremely galling; and four oxen harnessed with

collars will do as much work as six when yoked by the neck.

A few miles from Zurich, I passed through the village of Affholteren, near the church, which is prettily situated in the middle of a large field; skirted the small lake of Kaften, at a little distance from the picturesque ruins of Old-Regensberg; and gently ascended to New-Regensberg, which stands on an elevation, at the foot of the Lagerberg.

The counts of Regensberg were powerful barons during that period of anarchy and confusion which distinguished the 12th and 13th centuries. They were involved in constant wars, or rather desultory skirmishes, with the town of Zurich, until they were finally repulsed by Rhodolf of Habsburgh, then captain-general of the troops of Zurich. On the extinction of the counts of Regensberg, in the 14th century, their territory devolved to the House of Austria, and in 1409, became subject to Zurich.

The present burgh is inhabited by about 200 persons: who enjoy considerable privileges. They have their burgomaster, and a council of six members, who form the civil court of justice, from whose decision an appeal lies directly to Zurich. The criminal jurisdiction belongs to the bailif, who resides in the castle. This building was formerly of great strength, and frequently defied the attacks of Zurich. The greatest part of the present edifice was constructed in the last century; the only remains of the ancient fortress being some stone walls and a round tower, which commands a distant prospect. A well in the middle of the burgh, hollowed in the rock to the depth of 216 feet, which is now dry, furnished

formerly water to the garrison, during the obstinate sieges it maintained before the invention of gunpowder. Near this well is a copious fountain, which is supplied from a spring that rises in the Lagerberg. The adjacent country is a most delightful intermixture of hill and dale. The rock on which Regensberg is built, and which terminates in an abrupt precipice, forms the eastern extremity of that vast chain of mountains known by the general name of Jura, the branches of which are distinguished by different appellations. The branch that rises from this point is called the *Lagerberg*, to the summit of which I mounted on horseback. I passed for some way through cultivated enclosures, and afterwards through forests of pine, fir, and beech, until I reached the highest point, on which stands a signal-house. From this point, which overlooks the whole country, I enjoyed one of the most extensive and uninterrupted prospects, and particularly the finest distant view of the Alps, which I had yet seen in Switzerland.

To the north, the eye expatiates freely over the wilds of the Black Forest; to the east, beyond the confines of Bavaria; towards the west, traces the branches of the Jura extending in multifarious directions; to the south, looks down upon the fertile and enclosed regions in the canton of Zurich, on the lake and its populous banks, and admires the vast expanse of country swelling from plains to acclivities, from acclivities to hills, from hills to mountains, and terminating in those stupendous alps,

“ *Whose heads touch heaven.* ”

This wonderful and sublime prospect detained me insensibly till the close of the evening, when

I descended, through the gloomy forests of pine, fir, and beech, that clothe the sides of the Lagerberg; and, filled with those pleasing but melancholy reflections which the indescribable beauties of nature leave upon the mind, I rode slowly on, and did not arrive at Zurich till the gloom of night had overspread the horizon.

LETTER 11.

Winterthur — Castle of Kyburgh.

WINTERTHUR stands about twelve miles from Zurich; a town which, although situated in the canton, and under the protection of Zurich, yet retains its own laws, has its own magistrates, and is in a great measure independent. Winterthur was formerly governed by its own counts, who were probably a branch of the Kyburgh family, for both houses bore the same coat of arms. In the 14th century it was possessed by Hartman, count of Kyburgh, who first surrounded it with walls; and upon his death it devolved to his nephew Rhodolph of Hapsburgh. Rhodolph, afterwards emperor, conferred upon the inhabitants considerable privileges, for assisting him in the war in which he was engaged with Ottocar, king of Bohemia. It continued subject to his descendants until 1424, when the inhabitants claimed the protection, and obtained the alliance, of Zurich. In 1467, the archduke Sigismund having sold his rights to Zurich, that canton succeeded to his prerogatives.

A deputy from Zurich resides at Winterthur, but for no other purpose than for collecting the toll, half of which belongs to Zurich.

The government of Winterthur is aristocratical. The supreme power, in all things not interfering with the claims of Zurich, resides in the Great and Little Council. These two tribunals united are final judges in all criminal procedures, and pass sentence of death without appeal. The Little Council is invested with the general administration of affairs, and determines civil causes in the first resort. From their decision an appeal lies to the Great Council, and in all processes between a stranger and a burgher, to the senate of Zurich.

Although the town is considered as independent, and only under the protection of Zurich, yet that canton claims the right of restricting the inhabitants from manufacturing silk, and from establishing a printing-press, as interfering with the natives of Zurich. This restriction has occasioned, and still continues to excite, ill-will between the two towns, and has given rise to much litigation. And though Zurich did not prohibit the manufactures of silk, yet by forbidding the peasants of the canton from preparing and spinning the materials, this order amounted to a virtual prohibition.

At present a similar dispute is in agitation concerning the establishment of a printing-press at Winterthur. The right will scarcely be controverted; but as the cause will be finally determined by Zurich, it remains a doubt whether that government will be sufficiently disinterested to decide in favor of Winterthur against its own burghers.

In all other respects, excepting in these two articles of trade so profitable to Zurich, the commerce

of Winterthur lies under no restraint. The principal manufactures are muslins, printed cottons, and cloth. Some vitriol works are carried on with considerable success.

The town is small, and its inhabitants amount to about two thousand; who are for the most part remarkably industrious. The schools in this petty state are well endowed and regulated. The public library contains a small collection of books, and a great number of Roman coins and medals, chiefly found at Ober-Winterthur; among the most rare I observed a Didius Julianus and a Pertinax. Ober-Winterthur, or Upper Winterthur, at present only a small village near the town, in the high road leading to Frauenfeld, is the site of the ancient *Vitodurum*, a Roman station, and the most considerable place in this neighbourhood. No other remains of its former consequence subsist but the foundations of ancient walls, and the numerous Roman coins and medals which have been discovered. The Roman road, which once traversed the marshes between Winterthur and Frauenfeld, is no longer visible, because it forms the foundation of the present high-road.

The castle of Kyburgh, towering on the summit of an eminence which overlooks Winterthur and the adjacent district, is a picturesque object; and remarkable in the history of this country, during the times of confusion which preceded and followed the interregnum of the empire.

In the beginning of the 12th century, the counts of Kyburgh possessed the counties of Kyburgh, Lentzburgh, and Baden; and their territories were further increased by the accession of Burgdorf

and Thun, which fell to Ulric ⁶ in right of his wife Anne, sister of Berchtold V. duke of Zæringen, upon the demise of the latter without issue male. These domains devolved, in 1273, to Rhodolph count of Hapsburgh; on the death of his uncle Hartman the elder, the last count of Kyburgh. This inheritance rendered Rhodolph one of the most powerful princes in these parts; and probably opened his way to the imperial throne. Before his decease, the emperor ceded to his son Rhodolph and his heirs the county of Kyburgh, and his other dominions in Switzerland; and, on the demise of his son, confirmed this grant to his grandson John, the same who assassinated his uncle, the emperor Albert ⁷, and was called the Parricide.

Upon Albert's assassination, the sons of that emperor seized and kept possession of Kyburgh and the other hereditary domains in Switzerland, and transmitted them to their posterity. In 1424, the emperor Sigismund put under the ban of the empire Frederic duke of Austria, and granted for a sum of money the county of Kyburgh to Zurich. In 1442 it was restored to the House of Austria; but, in 1452, was finally ceded to Zurich by Sigismund, archduke of Austria, in order to liquidate a debt which he owed to the canton. From that time it has formed a bailliage in the canton of Zurich; but the title of Count of Kyburgh has been always retained by the House of Austria, and is still assumed by its present illustrious descendant Joseph the Second.

⁶ Some authors assert that Werner, son of Ulric, was the husband of Anne. Great confusion reigned in the early history of the Counts of Kyburgh, until Fuesli cleared it up. See article Kyburgh in Fuesli's *Erdbeschreibung*.

⁷ See Letter 14.

The castle of Kyburgh, which stands in a romantic and wild situation, has been constructed at different periods. Part is ancient, and not improbably the same as existed in the time of Rhodolph; although I could not discover a date anterior to 1424, the year in which it was granted to Zurich. In an apartment which was formerly a stable, I observed the portraits of all the bailifs who have resided in the castle from the time of its cession to Zurich. The bailif enjoys greater powers than are usually delegated by an aristocratical government. In criminal proceedings, he is only required to consult the jury of the district, though he is not bound by their opinion, and can inflict capital punishment without the necessity of referring the sentence to be confirmed by Zurich.

LETTER 12.

Frauenfeld — Of the Helvetic Confederacy — Diets.

FROM Winterthur I passed to Frauenfeld, a small town, or rather village, capital of Thurgau, containing scarcely a thousand inhabitants; and only remarkable as being the place where, since 1712, the deputies of the Swiss cantons assemble at the general diet.

This confederacy owes its origin to the treaty contracted in 1308, between Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, at the memorable revolution of 1308⁸.

⁸ See Letter 25.

The accession of Zurich, Berne, Lucerne, Zug, and Glaris, gave strength and solidity to this union, and a century and a half elapsed before a new member was admitted. At length, in 1501, Friburgh and Soleure being, after much difficulty, received into the league; upon that occasion the eight ancient cantons entered into a covenant, called the *Convention of Stantz*, by which the articles of union and mutual protection were finally settled⁹.

No change therein has been effected by the subsequent reception of the three other cantons, Basle, Schaffhausen, and Appenzel; they having subscribed to the same terms which Friburgh and Soleure had accepted. Without entering, however, into a minute detail, I shall endeavour, in this letter, to lay before you a short view of the Helvetic confederacy.

The code of public law, if I may so express it, between the combined republics of Switzerland, is founded upon the treaty of¹ Sempach in 1393; upon the convention of Stantz; and upon the treaty of peace concluded in 1712, at Arau, between the Protestant and Catholic cantons. It appears from these several treaties, which include or

⁹ See Letter 26.

¹ This treaty, which regulates the articles of war, was contracted between the eight ancient cantons, in conjunction with the republic of Soleure. It ordains, that no Swiss soldier shall quit his ranks in time of action, even although he should be dangerously wounded:

“ Nous entendons aussi que si quelqu'un estoit blessé en
 “ quelque façon que ce fust en combattant ou en assaillant,
 “ de sorte qu'il feroit inutile pour se défendre; il demeurera
 “ non obstant aussi avec les autres, jusques à ce que la bataille
 “ soit expirée: & pour cela ne fera estimé fuyard & ne l'en
 “ fâchera-t-on en sa personne ni en son bien aucunement.”

enlarge those that preceded, that the Helvetic union is a perpetual *defensive* alliance between the thirteen independent contracting powers, to protect each other by their united forces against all foreign enemies. Accordingly, if any member of the union should be attacked, that particular canton has a right to demand succours from the ²

² The respectable author of the *Account of Switzerland*, has fallen into a mistake in his description of the Helvetic union; and his error has been adopted by the Abbé Mably, in his *Droit Public de l'Europe*; by the compilers of the *Encyclopédie*; and by several other writers of distinction.

After having given a description of the Helvetic union, he concludes the relation as follows:

“ So far are they (the thirteen cantons) from making one
“ body or one commonwealth, that only the three old cantons
“ are directly allied with every one of the other twelve. There
“ is indeed such a connexion established between them, that,
“ in case any one canton were attacked, all the other twelve
“ would be obliged to march to its succour; but it would be by
“ virtue of the relation, that two cantons may have to a third,
“ and not of any direct alliance subsisting between every one of
“ them. As for example: of the eight old cantons, Lucerne has
“ a right of calling but five to its succour, in case of attack;
“ but then some of those five have a right of calling others,
“ with whom they are allied, though Lucerne be not; so that
“ at last all must march by virtue of particular alliances, and
“ not of any general one amongst them all.”

The above-cited account of the Helvetic union, would better have suited the league of the eight cantons before the convention of Stantz; when the confederate states were not so absolutely and directly united together as they are at present; and their alliance did not perhaps totally exclude every treaty of the same kind with other powers. It was only by the articles of that celebrated convention, and the alliance of the eight cantons with Friburgh and Soleure, that the union became absolutely fixed and general. It must be confessed, however, that several Swiss historians have given the same idea of the Helvetic union as that above-mentioned: and that even now, authors differ considerably upon some important articles of the league.

whole confederate body; and in case of war, the several forces to be supplied by each canton are precisely specified. It appears, however, from the stipulations to which the five cantons agreed, that they do not, in every respect, enjoy equal prerogatives with the eight ancient cantons. For, the latter reserved to themselves a right, if the question for declaring war against any foreign state should be *unanimously* carried in their assembly, to require the assistance of the five other cantons, without assigning the motive: whereas the former, cannot commence hostilities without the consent of the confederates; and if the enemy should be willing to enter into a negotiation concerning the matter in dispute, it must be referred to the arbitration of the eight ancient cantons. It is further stipulated, that if a rupture should ensue between the eight cantons, the five are to observe a strict neutrality.

The next essential object of the league, is to preserve general peace and good order. It is therefore covenanted, that all public disputes shall be finally settled between the contending parties in an amicable manner; and for this purpose particular judges and arbiters are appointed, who shall be empowered to compose the dissensions, that may happen to arise. To this is added, a reciprocal guarantee of the forms of government established in the respective commonwealths: for, in order to prevent internal factions, and revolts in any of the allied cantons, it was agreed by the convention of Stantz, that, in case of rebellion, the magistracy of such canton should be assisted by the forces of the others. Accordingly, the history of Switzerland affords many instances of protection and assistance

reciprocally given between the confederates, in defence and support of the respective governments.

No separate engagement, which any of the cantons may conclude, can be valid, if inconsistent with the fundamental articles of this general union: or in other words, the reciprocal contract between the members of the league, supercedes every other species of public obligation. With the foregoing exceptions, the several combined states are independent of each other: they may form alliances with any power, or reject the same, although all the others have acceded to it³; may grant auxiliary troops to foreign princes; may prohibit the money of the other cantons from being current within their own territories; may impose taxes; and, in short, perform every other act of absolute sovereignty.

The public affairs of the Helvetic body and their allies are discussed and determined in the several diets: and these are,

1. General diets; or general assemblies of the thirteen cantons, and of their allies.

2. Particular diets; as those of the eight ancient cantons; those of the Protestant cantons, with the deputies of the Protestants of Glaris and Appenzel,

³ The five cantons which agreed not to conclude any treaty without the consent of the eight, are necessarily excluded from this power, together with those particular cantons, which have bound themselves by private treaties not to contract any foreign alliance, without the reciprocal consent of the others; as for instance, Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, by the alliance at Brunnen in 1515. But this depends upon particular treaties, and has no relation to the general union. In fact, every canton is restrained by the general articles of the Helvetic union: but, conforming to those, no one republic is in any other instance controuled by the resolutions of the majority among the confederate cantons.

of the towns of St. Gallen, Bienne, and Mulhausen, called the *evangelical conferences*; those of the Roman Catholic cantons, with the deputies of the Catholics of Glaris and Appenzel, of the abbot of St. Gallen, and of the republic of the Vallais, called the *golden alliance*: as also the diets of particular cantons, which, beside being members of the general confederacy, have distinct and separate treaties with each other.

The ordinary meetings of the *general* diet are held once a year, and continue sitting one month; the extraordinary assemblies are summoned upon particular occasions. It is principally convened in order to deliberate upon the best measures for the security of the Helvetic body. The canton of Zurich appoints the time and place of meeting, and convenes the deputies by a circular letter. The deputy of Zurich also presides, unless the diet is held in the territory of any other canton; in that case, the deputy of that canton is president.

This diet formerly met at Baden; but since the conclusion of the civil war in 1712, between Zurich and Berne on one side, and Lucerne, Uri, Schwitz, Unterwalden, and Zug, on the other, (when the five latter renounced the co-regency of Baden) it has been assembled at Frauenfeld in Thurgau. Each canton sends as many deputies as it thinks proper.

It would be descending into a tedious detail, were I to enter into the particular connexions of the several allies, either with the whole Helvetic body, or with some of the cantons; and the different nature of these respective alliances. Suffer me only to remark, that the allies may be divided into *associate*, and *confederate* states: of the former,

are the abbot and town of St. Gallen, Bienne, and Mulhausen; of the latter, are the Grisons, the republic of the Vallais, Geneva, Neuchatel and the bishop of Basle.

The states thus comprised under the general denomination of associates and confederates, enjoy, by virtue of this union, a total independence on all foreign dominion; and partake of all the privileges and immunities granted to the Swiss in other countries. And notwithstanding some of these states are allied only with particular cantons; yet if any of them should be attacked, those cantons with whom they are in treaty would not only supply them with succours, but would also require the joint assistance of the remaining cantons: if therefore any part of the whole body should be invaded, all the other members would unite in its defence, either as immediate guarantees, or as auxiliaries of the actual guarantees.

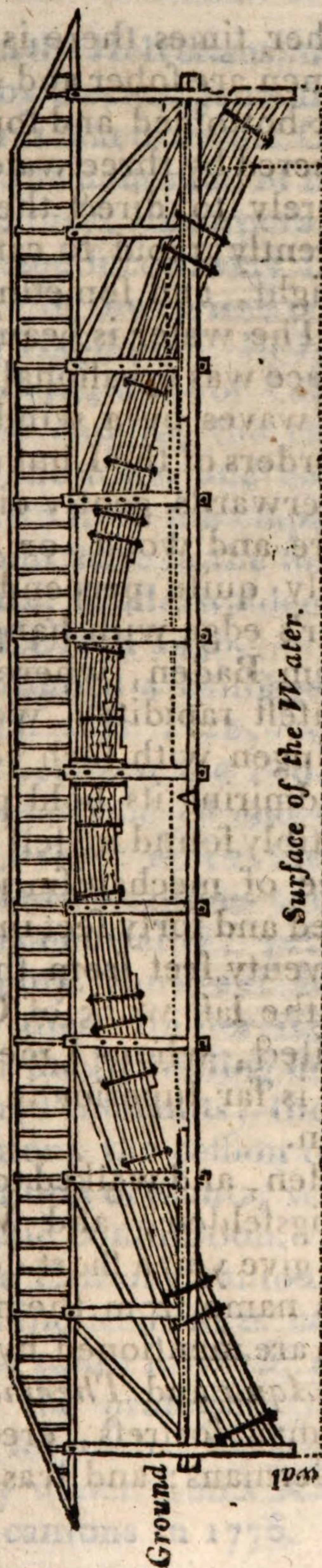
LETTER 13.

Route by Water from Zurich to Baden — Bridge of Wettingen — Baden — Castle of Hapsburgh.

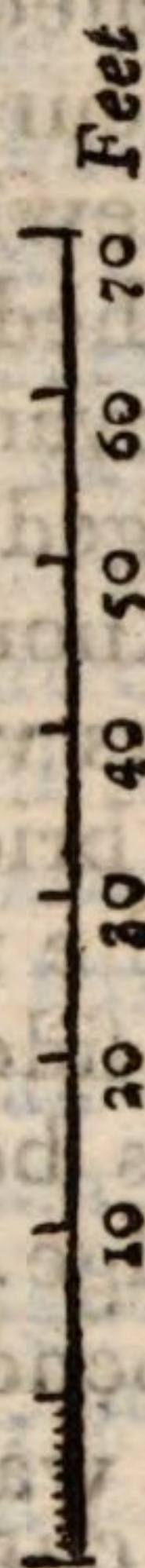
INSTEAD of following the usual route by land from Zurich to Basle, we proceeded the greatest part of the way by water. We embarked about two in the afternoon on the Limmat. The navigation of that river has been described as extremely hazardous, yet it is only dangerous upon the melting of the snow, or after violent rains, when in several places the rocks and shoals are covered with

Geometrical Elevation of the Timber Bridge, at Wettingen,

from actual measurements.



A. Floor of the Bridge, raised 18 inches higher in the middle and gradually diminishing towards each end as shown by the dotted lines.



with water. At other times there is no danger, provided the watermen are sober and experienced.

Our boat was flat-bottomed and long, and was rowed, or rather steered by three watermen, who used their oars merely to direct the vessel; the stream being sufficiently rapid to carry us along at the rate of six, eight, and sometimes even ten miles in the hour. The water is beautifully transparent; and its surface was occasionally raised and agitated with high waves by a wind opposite to the current. The borders of the Limmat are at first somewhat flat, afterwards gently rise into hills clothed with pasture and wood, or divided into vineyards; are lastly quite perpendicular, and fringed to the water's edge with hanging trees.

About a mile from Baden, where the Limmat flows with the greatest rapidity, we shot under the bridge of Wettingen with such velocity, that in the moment of admiring its bold projection on one side, I imperceptibly found myself on the other. This beautiful piece of mechanism is a wooden bridge, two hundred and forty feet in length, and suspended above twenty feet from the surface of the water: it was the last work of Grubenman, the self-taught architect, whom I mentioned in a former letter, and is far superior in elegance to that of Schaffhausen.

We landed at Baden, and walked to Hapsburgh, Schintznach, Königsfelden, and Windisch; of which places I shall give you a short description.

Baden derives its name from the neighbouring warm baths, which are mentioned by the ancients under the names of *Aquæ* and *Thermæ Helveticæ*. Baden was a Roman fortress, erected to curb the *Allemanni* or Germans; and was raised to the

ground, when the Helvetians, who supported Otho, were routed by Cæcina, general to Vitellius. Being rebuilt, it was taken by the Germans; fell afterwards under the dominion of the Franks; was, in the tenth century, incorporated in the German empire; became successively subject to the dukes of Zæringen, to the counts of Kyburgh, and to Rhodolph of Hapsburgh. In 1418, when his descendant Frederic, duke of Austria, was put under the ban of the empire, the canton of Zurich took possession of the town and county; and, having purchased them from the emperor Sigismund, admitted to a joint share in the sovereignty, Lucerne, Uri, Schwitz, Underwalden, and Zug, Berne in 1426, and Uri in 1445.

Baden continued a bailliage of these eight cantons until the year 1712, when the civil war breaking out between the Protestant and Catholic cantons, it was besieged and taken by the troops of Zurich and Berne; and at the peace of Arau was ceded to those two cantons and Glaris, which, on account of its neutrality, preserved its right of joint-sovereignty. Zurich and Berne did not, however, prove their disinterestedness, when, not content with finally settling the religious disputes in favor of the Protestants, they exacted from the Catholic cantons the cession of Baden, contrary to the convention of Stantz, which forms the basis of the Helvetic constitution. The umbrage conceived by the Catholic cantons at this step, was the principal inducement to conclude a perpetual alliance with France in 1715, and to throw themselves under the protection of that power. And this separate league has not been annulled by the general treaty which Louis XVI. contracted with the thirteen cantons in 1776.

Until 1712, the diet of the thirteen cantons assembled at Baden; but has been since transferred to Frauenfeld. The three cantons alternately appoint a bailif, who resides in the castle.

The inhabitants elect their own magistrates, and have their own judicial courts. In civil proceedings, an appeal lies to the bailif, and from his decision to the syndicate, composed of the deputies of the three cantons, and in the last resort to the three cantons themselves. In penal causes, the criminal court condemns, and the bailif enjoys the power of pardoning, or mitigating the sentence. The county or bailliage contains about 24,000 souls.

From Baden we walked through an agreeable and well-wooded country for some way along the side of the Limmat, whose steep banks are covered with vines to the edge of the water; and in about two hours crossed the Reufs into the canton of Berne. Having passed through a plain, we arrived at the baths of Schintznach, a place remarkable for its agreeable position on the banks of the Aar, and its tepid mineral waters. It is also well known as being the first place where the Helvetic society assembled. This society, formed by some of the most learned men in Switzerland, both of the Catholic and Reformed religion, first helped to extend the spirit of toleration, and to lessen that antipathy which subsisted between the members of the two persuasions. Its publications have tended to promote a general zeal for the diffusion of polite literature. The meeting of this liberal society is now transferred to Olten, a small town in the canton of Soleure.

Near Schintznach stands, on a lofty eminence, the ruins of the castle of Hapsburgh, to which we

ascended through a wood of beech, that seemed almost coeval with the date of the castle itself. These ruins consist of an ancient tower, constructed with maffy stones, in a rude style of architecture, and part of a small building of much later date.

It was erected in the beginning of the eleventh century, by Werner, bishop of Strasburgh, came to his brothers Radebot and Latzelin, and devolved to their descendants. Otho, grandson of Radebot, was probably the first person upon record who styled himself Count of Hapsburgh, and it continued to be the principal title by which his posterity was distinguished, until it was lost in a greater dignity, when Rhodolph of Hapsburgh was elevated to the imperial throne. His successors granted the castle and its dependencies as a fief, first to the lords of Wildeck, and afterwards to the lord of Wolen: in 1415 it was occupied by Berne, during the contest between the emperor Sigismond and Frederic of Austria, and given to the family of Segefern of Bruneck. In 1469, it was sold to the convent of Konigsfelden; on the dissolution of that monastery, at the reformation, was secularized, and seized by government; has gradually gone to decay; and is now inhabited by a peasant's family.

This castle commands an unbounded view over hills and dales, plains and forests, rivers and lakes, towns and villages, mountains and alps, emblem of that extent of power to which the talents of *one man*, who derived his title from this castle, raised himself and his descendants. You will readily perceive I allude to Rhodolph of Hapsburgh, who, from a simple baron of Switzerland, became emperor, and founded the House of Austria.

Rhodolph was born in 1218. After signaling his youth in a constant scene of warfare and contention, he was, in 1273, unexpectedly raised to the dignity of emperor, and conferred honor on that exalted station, no less by his political sagacity than by his military prowess. He died in 1291, after a long and glorious reign, and in the seventy-third year of his age.

Impressed with these ideas, as I considered, on the very spot, the origin of the House of Hapsburgh, and its gradual progress towards that height of power which it has since attained under the more distinguished appellation of the House of Austria; I could not but compare it to a small rill in the Alps, whose source is uncertain; which, having received or joined numberless streams, forms no inconsiderable river. Flowing through Switzerland, still almost unknown to its neighbours, it no sooner enters Germany, than it loses its name by its junction with the Danube; and, having collected the tribute of numberless rivers, rolls, with its accumulated and still increasing waters, through an immense extent of country, and falls by a hundred mouths into the Euxine Sea;

— e pare
Che guerra porta e non tributo al mare ⁴.

Rhodolph, during his residence in this castle, would not have given credit to a person endowed with the spirit of prophecy, who should have informed him, that, in little more than a century, a few small republics would drive his descendants from their hereditary dominions in Switzerland;

⁴ Tasso.

and erect upon their ruins, and on the basis of equal liberty, a formidable confederacy, which would be courted by the most powerful sovereigns. Still less perhaps would he have believed, that he himself should possess the imperial throne, and found the House of Austria; that his lineal descendants should rule over Germany, Hungary, Bohemia, Austria, Spain, Burgundy, the Low Countries, Milan, Naples, and Sicily, and extend their dominion and influence from the Euxine to a New World beyond the Atlantic.

L E T T E R 14.

Konigsfelden — Windish — Voyage down the Rhine.

HAVING satisfied our curiosity at the castle of Hapsburgh^s, that cradle of the House of Austria, which still confers a title on Joseph II. we descended into the plain of Konigsfelden, to a convent of the same name, built by Elizabeth, on the spot where her husband Albert was assassinated. The occasion of this assassination, and the circumstances attending it, were as follow. Albert, as guardian to his nephew John of Hapsburgh, had taken possession of his hereditary dominions in

^s There is also a castle of Hapsburgh, situated near the lake of Lucerne, which I visited in 1779. Some authors have erroneously asserted, that this was the castle from which the counts derived their titles. But Hergot has refuted this opinion; and unquestionably proved that honor to be due to the castle of Hapsburgh which I have described in the preceding letter. See Hergot, Gen. Dipl. Auf. Domus Hapsh.

Switzerland, and refused, under various pretences, to deliver them up to him. At length, wearied with repeated and fruitless solicitations, John entered into a conspiracy against the emperor, with Rhodolph de Warth, Ulric de Palme, Walther de Eschenbach, and Conrad de Tagerfeld.

The emperor dined at Baden, in his way to Rheinfelden, a town in the circle of Suabia, where the empress his consort had collected a considerable body of troops, with which he proposed invading the three cantons of Uri, Schweitz, and Underwalden, which had revolted against him. Contemporary historians, who have recorded the minutest circumstances in this whole transaction, relate, that Albert was in high spirits during the repast; and that, his nephew again entreating to be put into possession of his hereditary dominions, the emperor, with an air of banter, placed a garland of flowers upon his head, adding, at the same time, "This will be more suitable to you, for the present, than the cares of a troublesome government." This taunt had such an effect upon the young prince, that he burst into tears, flung away the flowers, and could not be prevailed upon to sit down to table.

After dinner, Albert continued his journey on horseback, accompanied by his son Leopold, the conspirators, and his usual attendants; and came near the town of Windisch, in the canton of Berne, to the Reufs, over which river passengers were usually ferried upon a raft. The conspirators passed over first, and were followed by Albert: as he was riding gently on, expecting his son Leopold, and the remainder of his suite, he was suddenly beset by the assassins. One of them seizing his horse's

bridle, John of Hapsburgh reproached him for his injustice in detaining his dominions; and struck him on the neck with his sword: Rhodolph de Warth wounded him in the side; and Ulric de Palme clove his head with a sabre. In this condition, they left him expiring upon the ground.

This assassination was committed the first of May 1308, in the open day, and in the sight of his son Leopold, and the rest of his court, who had not as yet passed the river; and who, though witnesses to the murder, yet could not assist the emperor. The field lies between the Aar and the Reufs, not far from the junction of those two rivers; and the very spot, where he was massacred, is marked by a convent, erected by his wife Elizabeth and his daughter Agnes: the place was called *Konigsfelden*, or King'sfield; a name it retains to this day. The remains of the emperor were buried in the convent of Witterling, from whence they were afterwards transported to Spire, and there interred.

The assassins escaped into the cantons of Uri, Schweiz, and Underwalden, expecting to find a sure asylum in a nation, which Albert was preparing to invade. But the generous natives, detesting a crime of so atrocious a nature, although committed upon the person of their greatest and most formidable enemy, refused to protect the murderers. D'Eschenbach concealed himself in the disguise of a common laborer during thirty years, nor was his rank discovered till he confessed it upon his death-bed; De Palme, destitute of common necessities, died in extreme poverty; De Warth, tied to a horse's tail, like a common malefactor, and dragged to the place of execution, was broken upon the wheel. John of Hapsburgh, commonly

known by the appellation of *parricide*, from this assassination, did not reap the expected benefits of the crime; for, by order of the emperor Henry the Seventh, he retired into a monastery of Augustine friars, where he died in 1313.

The widow of Albert turned her whole thoughts towards revenging the death of her husband; and in this pursuit involved the innocent as well as the guilty; all, who had the smallest connexion with the assassins, being sacrificed with undistinguished cruelty to the manes of the emperor. Mean while the three cantons were, for a few years, left to the undisturbed enjoyment of their liberties, and to strengthen themselves against any future attack; and thus they innocently reaped the sole advantage which was derived from this assassination.

The convent or abbey of Konigsfelden comprised, within its extensive precincts, a nunnery of the order of St. Clare, and a monastery of monks of the order of minorites, separated from each other by a wall. It was richly endowed by Elizabeth, her five sons, and her daughter Agnes queen of Hungary, who assumed the habit of a nun, and here passed the remainder of her days. At the reformation the abbey was secularized, and its lands appropriated by government: part of the building became the residence of the bailif, part was converted into an hospital, and part was suffered to fall to ruin.

Many of the cells, formerly occupied by the nuns, still exist in their original state; and one, in particular, is distinguished as the habitation in which queen Agnes lived and died.

The chapel still remains entire, but is no longer used for divine service. The glass windows are

beautifully colored, and painted with various histories of the Old Testament; with the portraits of Elizabeth and Agnes, of the emperor Albert, and his sons. On the walls also are coarsely represented the figures of Leopold duke of Austria, and the principal nobles who perished at the battle of Sempach. Elizabeth and Agnes, and several princes and princesses of the House of Austria, were buried in this chapel; but their bones were a few years ago removed to the abbey of St. Blaise, in the Black Forest, where they were deposited with great pomp, and magnificent sepulchres erected to their memory.

Near Königsfelden is the small village of Windisch, standing at the conflux of the Aar and the Reuss, and supposed by antiquarians to occupy the site of *Vindonissa*, a Roman fortress mentioned by Tacitus. In traversing the place I did not observe the least signs of any antiquities; but various lapidary inscriptions, mile-stones, sepulchral urns, medals, coins, and gems, which have been found in great abundance, sufficiently prove, that it must have been the station of a large Roman colony. The reader, who is inclined to reflect on the vicissitudes of human possessions, will recollect with pleasure the following quotation, which so happily relates to the present subject: “Within the
“ancient walls of Vindonissa, the castle of Haps-
“burgh, the abbey of Königsfeld, and the town
“of Bruck, have successively arisen. The philo-
“sophic traveller may compare the monuments
“of Roman conquest, of feudal or Austrian
“tyranny, of monkish superstition, and of in-
“dustrious freedom. If he be truly a philosopher,

“ he will applaud the merit and happiness of his
“ own time ⁶. ”

Early the next morning we embarked on the Aar, which, though here a trifling stream, yet, being considerably swelled by the tribute of waters from the Reufs and the Limmat, soon becomes a considerable river. Its banks are agreeably enlivened with meadows and woods, and spotted occasionally with villages, castles, and ruins, hanging on the water's edge. Having made a small turn, it falls by a strait channel into the Rhine, vying in size and rapidity with the great river in which it loses its name: its waters, which are of a silvery hue, are for a long way distinguished from those of the Rhine; which, being transparent, and of a sea-green color, seem to disdain the union.

The banks of the Rhine are far superior in wildness and beauty to those of the Aar, in many parts rising perpendicularly, yet feathered with wood; in others sloping in gentle declivities, richly bordered with vines, forest, and pastures; and exhibiting a continual succession of towns and villages. The rapid stream carried us above eighteen miles in three hours, and we disembarked at Laufenburgh, where the Rhine forms a small cataract, which though greatly inferior to the fall of the same river near Schaffhausen, yet deserves to be visited by travellers for the beauties of the scenery. As I stood upon the crags of the northern shore, the principal objects were, a high bridge, partly open and partly covered, supported by three lofty stone piers; on the south a row of houses, with an old ruined castle on the summit, boldly overhanging

⁶ Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. xiii. p. 404.

the water; a perspective of woods and meadows under the arcades of the bridge; and the river dashing over its craggy bed, in a sloping cataract, until it loses itself suddenly among the rocks which close the view.

About half a mile below this fall we re-embarked, and found the waters in many parts more agitated than those of the Limmat; particularly near Rheinfelden, where they rush with such increasing velocity, that they were troubled like the waves of the sea, and, beating against the boat, turned it obliquely by their violence. Here we were hurried along with such rapidity, that though I had a pencil in my hand, I had no time for observation, much less for description; I could only catch a general glance of the romantic scenery, as we passed under a picturesque bridge of several arches, suspended high above the surface of the river, and joined to a steep rock, on which towered some majestic ruins. In many parts, and for a considerable way, our vessel passed within a few inches of the shelving rocks, and was only prevented from striking against them by the dexterity of the pilot.

As we approached Basle the stream became gradually less rapid; and we disembarked highly delighted with our expedition.

LETTER 15.

*The Town of Basle — Erasmus — Library —
Holbein.*

I Arrived at Basle, as I supposed, about twelve at noon; but was much surprised to find, that all the clocks in the town actually struck one: and, on inquiry, I was informed, that they constantly go an hour faster than the real time. Different reasons have been assigned for this singularity: some assert, that it was first practised during the council of Basle, in order to assemble, at an earlier hour, the cardinals and bishops, who being very lazy and indolent, always arrived too late. Others maintain, that a conspiracy being formed to assassinate the magistrates at midnight; one of the burgomasters, who had notice of the design, advanced the town-clock an hour; by which means the conspirators, imagining they had missed the appointed time, retired; and that the clocks are still kept in the same advanced state, as a perpetual memorial of this happy deliverance. But there is a third reason given for this strange custom, which seems the most probable. It is well known that the choirs of cathedrals are constructed towards the east: that of Basle declines somewhat from this direction; and the sun-dial, which is placed upon the outside of the choir, and by which the town-clock is always regulated, partakes of this declination; a circumstance which, according to the celebrated Bernoulli, occasions a variation from the true time of above five-and-forty minutes.

The inhabitants of Basle are still so strongly attached to this whimsical customs, that, although

it has been often proposed in the sovereign council to regulate their clocks properly, yet the motion has been invariably rejected: and the people would suspect that their liberties were invaded, if their clocks were to agree with those of the rest of Europe. A few years since, several leading men of the town determined to alter the hand of the sun-dial half a minute a day, until the shadow should imperceptibly point to the true hour. This expedient was accordingly practised, and the clock had already lost near three quarters of an hour, when an accident discovered the design: the magistrates were accordingly compelled to place the hand of the sun-dial in its former position, and to regulate the hours by it as usual. Indeed, long-established customs, however indifferent or ridiculous, are apt to make so strong an impression upon vulgar minds, as to become sometimes dangerous, and always difficult to be abolished; especially among a people, like those of this country, who are averse to any change, even in the minutest articles. I need not remind you, how long it was before we could be persuaded in England, to reckon our years according to the general mode of computation received by the rest of Europe.

Basse is beautifully situated upon the banks of the Rhine, near the point where that river, which here becomes very broad, deep, and rapid, after flowing for some way from east to west, turns suddenly to the north. It consists of two towns joined together by a long bridge; the *large* town lies on the side of Switzerland, and the *small* town on the opposite banks of the river. It stands very favorably for commerce; an advantage which the inhabitants have by no means neglected: for they

have established a great variety of manufactures, particularly of ribbands and cottons; and an extensive trade is carried on by the principal merchants.

The cathedral is an elegant gothic building, but strangely disfigured by a daubing of rose-colored paint spread over the whole edifice. This cathedral contains the ashes of Gertrude Anne countess of Hohenburgh, and wife of the emperor Rhodolph I. She died at Vienna, in 1281, and her body was conveyed to Basle. Her two christian names gave rise to much confusion, and led many historians to conclude that Gertrude and Anne were two different personages, and successive wives of that emperor; while others ridiculously supposed that both were married to him at the same time: nor were these erroneous opinions confuted, and the controversy finally settled, till Hergot, the laborious genealogist⁷ of the House of Austria, proved, from the most unquestionable authorities of ancient diplomas, the identity of this divided personage; and that the mistake arose from her being uniformly styled Gertrude before her coronation, and Anne after the performance of that ceremony. She bore to her husband fourteen children; and though the mother of so large a family, yet such was her extreme sensibility, that the grief which she suffered at the departure of her daughter Clementina to Naples, on her marriage with Charles Martel, hurried the afflicted parent to her grave.

In the same church are deposited, under a marble tomb, the venerable remains of the great Erasmus. That distinguished writer joined to superior learning, and a peculiar elegance of style, the

⁷ See Hergottii Geneal. Diplom. Dom. Aust. vol. i. p. 125.

the keenest wit, which he pointed, not only against the vices and ignorance of the monks, but the general corruptions and disorders of the Roman church. He was indeed the forerunner of Luther, in his first attacks upon the Catholics, respecting the sale of indulgences: but afterwards, when the controversy appeared more serious, and an open breach with the church of Rome seemed inevitable; he condemned the proceedings of that bold reformer. He considered them, indeed, as altogether unwarrantable; and, although he had himself censured and exposed the corruptions that infected the Catholic religion; yet he zealously inculcated submissive obedience to the decrees of what he called the "universal church." Agreeably to these sentiments, he advised the protestants to endeavour at obtaining, by mild and patient measures, what they might indiscreetly lose by a warmer and more violent opposition.

Such temperate counsels were ill suited to the daring and impetuous spirit of Luther. Accordingly, while Erasmus was acting the part of a mediator, and endeavouring to moderate and allay the flame on each side, he drew upon himself the displeasure of both parties: and, in allusion to this temporizing conduct, one of his adversaries applied to him, not unaptly, that line in Virgil;

Terras inter cælumque volabat.

The impartial truth seems to be, that he was by no means disposed to become a martyr in the cause: the natural timidity of his temper, a too great deference to persons of superior rank and power, and perhaps also the fear of losing his pensions, probably induced him to take a decided part against

the reformers, and condemn their separation from the church of Rome.

But it would be uncandid to impute his conduct wholly to selfish considerations: something may fairly be ascribed to the powerful impressions of early prejudices; and something to that rooted love of peace and studious tranquillity, which seem to have been the governing principles of all his actions. But, whatever imperfections may be discovered in some particular parts of his character, his memory must ever be revered by every friend of genius, learning, and moderation. Liveliness of imagination, depth and variety of erudition, together with great sagacity of judgment, were in him eminently united. He infused a spirit of elegance even into theological controversies; and contributed to disencumber literature from that scholastic jargon with which it was disgraced. Erasmus reflected much honor upon this town, by choosing it as the favorite place of his residence, and publishing from hence the greatest part of his valuable works. In the public library are preserved, with great veneration, several of his letters, and his last testament, written with his own hand; as also his hanger and seal.

The university of Basle was formerly eminent in the literary history of Europe. Who, in the least conversant in letters, is unacquainted with the celebrated names of Oecolampadius, Amerbach, the three Bauhins, Grynæus, Buxtorf, Wetstein, Iselin, the Bernoullis, and Euler. If it has fallen from its pristine state of renown, its decline must be principally imputed to the casual method of electing the professors; but it still boasts several members who do honor to their native town by their learning and abilities.

The public library contains a small collection of books, chiefly remarkable for several rare and valuable editions; particularly of those printed in the fifteenth century. The most curious manuscripts are numerous letters of the first reformers, and of other learned men in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries; and an account of the proceedings at the council of Basle. The minutes of that council were taken by John of Segovia; and are supposed to be the same which are preserved either in the library, or in the archives of the town: the former is written on paper, the latter on parchment. A question has arisen which of these two is the original. Some conclude in favor of that in the archives, on account of the many false readings and mistakes in the other, which are plainly the faults of a copyist. Others give the preference to that in the library, because it is written in different hands, and with different ink, which seem to imply that it was noted down at various intervals, according as the acts of the council were passed; whereas that in the archives, being penned on parchment, in the same hand, and with the same ink, was probably copied from the original minutes; for who, it is urged, would take minutes on parchment? A third opinion, still more probable, is, that neither of these are the original. Several passages are wanting in both; which omission may have proceeded from the transcriber's not being able to read every part of the original. It is probable also that John of Segovia took away the minutes, and deposited them at Rome; and that one of these manuscripts was the copy transcribed by order of the council; of these, the manuscript on parchment appears to be the most authentic.

In a suit of rooms belonging to this library, is a cabinet of petrifications, collected in the canton of Basle by the Rev. Mr. Annoni; some ancient medals and gems; a few antiquities found at Augst; a large number of prints; and some fine drawings and paintings, consisting chiefly of originals by Holbein, who was a native of this town. These pictures are, most of them, in the highest preservation: the connoisseur can here trace all the different manners of Holbein, and compare the productions of his youth with those of his maturer age. A few are here preserved, which he painted before he had reached his sixteenth year; and one extremely curious, which he drew upon a sign for a writing-master. The portraits of himself, his wife, and children, in the same group, are much admired for nature and simplicity of expression. The most valuable of these paintings is an altar-piece, in eight compartments, which represents the passion of our Saviour: a performance, in which this admirable artist has carried to the highest perfection, that singular brilliancy of coloring so peculiar to most of his compositions. I was much struck with a profile of his friend and patron Erasmus, writing his commentary upon St. Matthew: there is a spirit and animation in the countenance, finely expressive of the great author's sagacious and penetrating talents⁸.

⁸ Among the paintings of Holbein I observed a very fine portrait which this artist made of a courtesan of Basil; she is drawn in the dress of a Lais, with a little Cupid on her lap aiming a dart at the spectator. This picture has been found on an altar where the people worshipped the belle under the name of the mother of God. The words *Verbum Domini manet in æternum* written in golden letters, are still legible on the frame that encloses it. RAMOND.

Among the works of Holbein, that discover the liveliness of his fancy, must be mentioned the sketches which he drew, on perusing the Eulogium of Folly by Erasmus, on the margin of that work, which he received as a present from the author. This curious volume is preserved in the library; and has been lately published by Mr. Haas, in French, Latin, and German, with fac-similes of the original designs, engraved on wood.

The dance of death, in the church-yard of the predicants of the suburb of St. John, is frequently shown to strangers as being of Holbein's pencil. It is painted in oil-colors upon a wall which encloses the burial-ground: but, as it has several times been retouched, no traces are discoverable of that great master's hand. In fact, the Hon. Horace Walpole, and other unquestionable judges, have proved, that this performance was painted before Holbein was born, and that he was not employed even in retouching it. It is probable, however, that, from this ancient painting, he took the first hint towards composing his famous drawings on the dance of death. In treating this subject, he has displayed such wonderful richness of imagination, and discovered so much judgment in the disposition, and so much spirit in the execution of the figures, that Rubens studied them with particular attention, and took drawings from them.

The originals of Holbein's dance of death were purchased by Mr. Fleischman of Strasburgh, at the sale of the famous collection of Crozat, at Paris; of which Mariette has published a catalogue. They are now in the possession of prince Gallitzin, minister from the empress of Russia to the court of

Vienna. They consist of forty-four small drawings: the outlines are sketched with a pen, and they are slightly shaded with Indian ink. I had frequent opportunities of seeing them, during my continuance at Vienna; and particularly admired the variety of attitudes and characters in which death is represented.

Prints have been taken from some of these drawings by Hollar, which are very scarce. Mr. de Mechel, a celebrated artist of this place, has already engraved them after the original designs; a work which cannot fail of being highly acceptable to the admirers of the fine arts. He has added four engravings, which are not in the prince's collection, and which are taken from the prints of Hollar. Mr. de Mechel ingeniously conjectures, from the dresses and characters of several of the figures in the dance of death, that the author sketched them while he was in England. They were, probably, in the Arundelian collection when Hollar engraved them?

He has finished also a set of prints from the fine paintings of the Duffeldorf gallery, and likewise engravings of the famous Hedlinger's medals. This able artist has a small but well-chosen collection of paintings: and his magazine of prints (in which article he carries on a very considerable trade) is

⁹ When *Holbein* drew his dance of death, this sort of composition was much in vogue. Among other works on this subject, I have seen a very curious book, entitled: *Les simulachres & historiées faces de la mort, autant élégamment pourtraictes que artificiellement imaginées. A Lyon soubz l'écu de Coloigne, 1538.* This book contains forty-one wooden cuts, colored, the design of which is very good. Several of the figures reminded me of the work of *Holbein*, but I could not make any comparifon. RAMOND.

perhaps one of the largest and most complete in Europe. I am acquainted with no person to whom the curious traveller can address himself with greater advantage than to Mr. de Mechel, nor from whom he can receive more useful information. To a particular knowledge of the physical beauties of Switzerland, he joins a thorough acquaintance with the different governments, customs, and manners of the several cantons. As he is intimately connected with the principal men of learning in this country, his letters of recommendation are the most desirable, and the most beneficial, that can be procured: and he enjoys as much satisfaction in conferring, as can be received by accepting, his good offices. He indeed possesses a great fund of good-humor, an amiable frankness of disposition, and a certain originality of manner, which, together with his other valuable qualities, recommend him as a no less pleasing than useful acquaintance.

I visited also the small but pleasing collection of pictures, mostly of the Flemish and Dutch schools, belonging to Mr. Faesch, member of the Great Council. In the court-yard before his house is a wooden statue of Rhodolph I. sitting on a throne, and clothed with the imperial insignia; underneath I observed the date of 1273, the era of that emperor's coronation; and the rudeness of the sculpture renders it probable that it is an original of that great emperor, who was besieging Basle when he received the unexpected news of his election. The gates were immediately thrown open; and he was instantly admitted as a friend into that town, which had shut its gates against him as their enemy. On this occasion he resided a short time at Basle, and, as tradition relates, in this very house.

I am, &c.

LETTER 16.

Government of Basle.

THE bishops of Basle once possessed the sovereignty over the city and canton; but were gradually deprived of their prerogatives; and, in 1501, finally quitted this town, when the canton joined the Helvetic confederacy. They at first retired to Friburgh in Brisgau, and afterwards, establishing their residence at Porentru, they entirely lost the trifling authority and inconsiderable prerogatives which remained to them. Upon the introduction of the reformation in 1525, the constitution was in some measure changed; and the power of the aristocracy limited.

It would seem in theory scarcely possible to divide the aristocratical and democratical commonwealths into so many different species as exist in Switzerland; for, in this country, every republic has its peculiar modification; and there is none more singular than that of Basle. To view the general outlines of the constitution, it has the appearance of an absolute aristocracy¹; but, upon considering it in detail, it will be found to incline towards a democracy. The supreme legislative power resides in the Great and Little Councils,

¹ An aristocracy (strictly speaking) means that form of government, which places the supreme power in the nobles, exclusively of the people; but here I mean by it, the confining of the sovereign authority to a certain limited number of persons, without considering whether they are patricians or plebeians, nobles or commons: for at Basle every citizen who is noble, and who chuses to retain his title of nobility, is incapable of being elected a member of the sovereign council.

consisting of about three hundred members: and the authority of these two councils combined, is without control. They enact laws, declare war and peace, contract alliances, and impose taxes: they elect the several magistrates, appoint their own members, nominate to all employments, and confer the right of burghership. The general administration of government is committed by the Great Council to the Senate, or Little Council; that is, to a part of its own body. This Senate, composed of sixty members, together with the four chiefs of the republic, two burgomasters, and two great tribunes, is divided into two bodies, which act by rotation. The acting division continues in office one year, decides finally in all criminal causes, superintends the police, and exercises several other powers subordinate to the Sovereign Council. The collective body of citizens assembles only once a year, when the magistrates publicly take an oath to maintain the constitution, and preserve the liberties and immunities of the people, inviolate. The reciprocal oath of obedience to the laws, is administered to the citizens in their respective tribes.

But, notwithstanding the great and boundless prerogatives of the Great Council; yet the meanest citizen is legally capable of being admitted into that body; and, by the singular method of election, may possibly be chosen. For, the vacancies in the two councils are supplied from all ranks of citizens, one class only excepted, the members of the university. These citizens are divided into eighteen tribes, called in German *Zunfte*; fifteen of which belong to the larger town, and three to the smaller: each of the first-mentioned fifteen

tribes, returns four members to the Senate; and each of the whole eighteen, sends twelve to the Great Council. Formerly these elections were determined by a plurality of voices: but, as by these means the richest person was always certain of being chosen; a *ternaire* was established in 1718; that is, three candidates were nominated, and from these the successor was appointed² by lot.

Although this mode of election in some measure put a stop to corruption; yet it was not sufficient to counteract entirely the influence of the wealthy: and, as the poorer citizens could seldom succeed to the most honorable or lucrative employments; they procured an act to be passed in 1740, changing the *ternaire* into a *senaire*: by which six candidates, instead of three, were put in nomination, and drew lots for the charge. Six tickets, containing the names of the respective candidates, and separately placed in silver eggs, are inserted into one bag; and the same number

² The fifteen tribes in the great town are called *Zunfte*, and the three in the small town *Gesellschaften*, or companies. It may also be remarked, that the citizens of the small town enjoy more advantages than those of the great town; inasmuch as the former may be appointed to public employments either in the tribes or in the companies; whereas a citizen of the great town cannot be admitted into the companies, unless he resides in the small town. C.

The citizens of the lesser town, besides being incorporated in the tribes of the larger, which renders their condition quite equal, have also obtained to form three companies, sending each twelve members to the great council; and such are its particular privileges, that its citizens lose their freedom on removing to the larger town; and those that are members of the council are obliged, when they settle in it, to rent a room in the lesser, where they must put on and depose their gowns on council-days. RAMOND.

of tickets, five of which are blanks, and one is marked with the vacant employment, are placed in another. The reigning burgomaster and the great tribune, appointed to be the drawers of this *official* lottery, both at the same instant take a ticket from each bag; and the candidate whose name comes out at the same time with the ticket on which the employment is written, obtains the post.

It would be too tedious, and indeed too uninteresting, a detail, to enter into a minute account of the forms and circumstances requisite to be observed in selecting the several candidates. To give, however, some general idea of this matter: — Upon a vacancy in the Great Council, for instance, the six candidates must be taken from the citizens of that tribe, to which the person who occasioned the vacancy belonged; and must be nominated by such of the members of the Great and Little Councils, as are of the same tribe. The candidates for the senate and for the tribunes or chiefs of each tribe, called in German *meister*, are appointed by the Great Council. There is but one case, in which the *senaire* is not practised: for, upon the death of a burgomaster, his colleague, who is the great tribune, succeeds of course.

It should seem, that many inconveniences must necessarily flow from this absurd method of supplying vacant posts in the government; as they are left entirely to the capricious disposal of fortune. In fact, it has not unfrequently happened, that a candidate, whose knowledge and abilities rendered him capable of being serviceable to the state, has never obtained the successful ticket; while fortune has bestowed it upon another by

no means qualified to fulfil the duties of the employment. However, notwithstanding the ill effects resulting from this casual method of election; the management of public affairs is in general tolerably well conducted; and there are few instances of civil justice being unwisely administered, or of innocence being sacrificed to superior wealth or power.

But the counsellors of state and the several magistrates, are not the only persons chosen by lot; even the professors in the university are elected in the same manner. The three candidates however, (for in this instance the *ternaire* is still in use) must be nominated from those who have taken the degree of doctor. Hence nothing is more common than for a candidate to offer himself for the professorship of a science, which he has never made the peculiar object of his studies; if the chair of that particular branch of literature in which he excels is already occupied: for, under these circumstances, the respective unqualified professors change places with each other. Thus (to mention an instance from a family well known) John Bernoulli, the famous mathematical professor in this university, who died in 1748, left three sons, Nicholas, Daniel, and John, all justly celebrated for their skill in that science, in which their father and uncle so eminently excelled. Nicholas died at St. Petersburg, member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences; and Daniel, having followed his brother into Russia, returned to Basle on obtaining the professorship of anatomy, which he afterwards had an opportunity of happily exchanging for that of natural philosophy, and died in 1782. A similar circumstance

happened to the third son John: after being several times appointed an unsuccessful candidate in the lottery of professorships, chance at length conferred on him the chair of *rhetoric*; but, upon his father's death, he changed with Mr. Ramspeck, to whom fortune, with her usual judgment, had assigned the professorship of mathematics ³.

The sumptuary laws are very strict at Basle. The use of coaches in the town is not indeed prohibited, as at Zurich; but, what is more singular, no citizen or inhabitant is allowed to have a servant behind his carriage. Laws of this kind may be carried, in some instances, to a scrupulous and even ridiculous minuteness; upon the whole, however, they are excellent regulations, and not only useful but necessary in a small republic. They have certainly operated with

³ The following curious epitaph on a lawyer, interred in the cathedral, complains, that the deceased, notwithstanding his advanced age of 84, which had afforded many opportunities of being nominated candidate for various offices of state, had been continually excluded by fortune.

S. E. S.

Locum quo sepeliretur
de suo acquisivit

JOH: GEORG SCHWEIGHAUSER

J. U. L. Ducentumvir

Fori judicarii & appellationis
ultra XL. Annos assiduus Assessor
muneribus autem academicis

& publicis officiis

sorte constanter exclusus

vixit tamen & vivere desiit

ut virum honestum decet

natus mense Januario 1695.

Obiit die VII mensis Junii 1779.

H. M. H. P.

great advantage in this town: for, although it contains several families who are considerably rich; yet a happy simplicity of manners is still so predominant, that you would smile, if I were to particularize those articles which pass under the opprobrious denomination of *luxury*.

The lower rank of citizens are in general so strongly prejudiced in favor of their own country, as to seem convinced that true felicity is only to be found at Basle: and indeed that class of people are in no part of the world more happy. Every person boasts that he is free, and is so in reality: and, as the citizens not only possess very considerable privileges and immunities, but each individual may also indulge the hope of being one day chosen into the sovereign council; he enjoys a certain degree of respect and consideration extremely flattering to his self-importance. In fact, there are several among the magistrates who exercise the meaner trades; and the present treasurer, whose name is Munch, is a baker: he is indeed a person of distinguished knowledge and merit; and has been twice appointed one of the candidates for the office of great tribune; which, if fortune had favored him, would have been followed, on the next vacancy, by his succession to the office of burgo-master.

In general the burghers sons receive an excellent education: they always learn the Latin, and not unfrequently the Greek tongue; and it is by no means unusual, even for the lower sort of tradesmen, to employ their leisure hours in the perusal of Horace, Virgil, and Plutarch.

The conduct of magistrates is no where more freely, nor more severely, criticised than at Basle. The people may sometimes, no doubt, extend this privilege beyond its proper limits; but they can never be totally restrained from exercising it, without striking at the vitals of their liberty: it is essential to its existence, and no free government can long survive its extinction.

Basle is the largest, and seems formerly to have been one of the most populous, towns in Switzerland: its extent is capable of containing above a hundred thousand inhabitants; whereas it can scarcely number more than fourteen thousand. Many particular causes may have concurred to occasion this remarkable decrease of people; but I will mention only one or two reasons to which it may be assigned.

It is proved, from undoubted calculations, that, in all great cities, the number of burials exceeds that of births; consequently, unless this unequal proportion is compensated by a constant accession of new inhabitants, in process of time every great town must necessarily become depopulated. Now the citizens of Basle are so jealous of the burghership, and pride themselves so much upon the privileges which accompany it, that they seldom deign to confer it upon foreigners: a supply therefore to balance that gradual waste of people I have mentioned, can never be derived from an influx of strangers, where they are not permitted to carry on commerce, or to follow any trade. A few years ago, some of the magistrates, sensible of the impolicy attending this unlimited prohibition, procured a law, by which the freedom of the town and the right of burghership was allowed

to be conferred upon strangers; but it was clogged at the same time with so many restrictions, as by no means to answer the purpose for which it was intended. Every principle, indeed, of private interest and ambition, concurred to prevent its efficacy: and no wonder; for, bodies of men are seldom actuated by so generous a spirit as to sacrifice their personal and immediate advantages, to the future welfare and prosperity of their country.

I am, &c.

LETTER 17.

Combat at the Hospital of St. James, between the Forces of Louis Dauphin of France, and a Corps of Swiss Troops — Ruins of Augst — Mulhausen.

CURIOSITY led me, during my continuance at Basle, to visit the hospital and burying-ground of St. James, not far from the town, and near the small River Birs, celebrated for a desperate combat, in 1444, between the Swiss and the dauphin of France, afterwards Louis the Eleventh: and never was Swiss valor and intrepidity so signally displayed, as by a few battalions of their troops on that memorable day.

This famous battle was fought in consequence of some disputes, which arose between the canton of Zurich and those of Schweitz and Glaris. Zurich refusing to abide by the mediation of the
five

five neutral cantons, who had decided in favor of Schweitz, and Glaris, a civil war ensued: upon which occasion, Zurich formed an alliance with the emperor Frederic the Third. The seven ancient cantons, in order to obtain a renunciation of this alliance, which they justly considered as an infringement of their league, laid siege to that town. Frederic, unable to send a sufficient body of troops to its relief, applied for additional succours to Charles the Seventh, king of France; who, as well with a view of dissolving the council of Basle, as for the particular purpose required, ordered a considerable army to march, under the command of his son Louis. Accordingly the dauphin entered with his forces into Alsace; and, after laying waste and harassing the adjacent provinces, appeared before Basle. Upon this occasion, a detachment of fifteen hundred Swiss from the army of the confederates (at that time employed in besieging Farnspurgh) were ordered to throw themselves into the town of Basle, which was but thinly garrisoned.

This handful of men advanced without interruption to the plain of Brattelen; where they charged, with such determined and well-conducted valor, eight thousand of the enemy's cavalry, that the latter were driven back as far as Muttens; at which place the repulsed were joined by another corps: but, notwithstanding this reinforcement, the Swiss renewing the assault with fresh intrepidity, forced them to repass the river Birs; where the main body of the army was chiefly drawn up. Such was the firmness and solidity of the Swiss in these several rencounters, that, to use the expression of an old French

chronicle, when the cavalry charged “they could make no more impression, than if they had attacked a rock; or an impenetrable wall.” The Swiss, encouraged by this wonderful success, and exasperated with the most spirited indignation against the invaders of their country, disregarded the remonstrances of their officers, and rashly attempted to force their passage over a bridge, which was guarded by a large body of the enemy: but this effort of inconsiderate valor proving ineffectual, these gallant soldiers, throwing themselves into the river, gained the opposite shore, in the face of a battery of cannon that was playing against them.

What could the desperate courage of so small a number avail, against an army of thirty thousand men advantageously posted in an open plain? They had no alternative but either to throw down their arms, or gloriously expire. They bravely preferred the latter: accordingly five hundred took possession of a small island near the bridge, and, after resolutely defending themselves to the last extremity, were cut to pieces. A like number forced their way through the ranks of the enemy, and were making towards Basle; when they were opposed by a large body of horse, posted there to prevent the inhabitants of the town from falling to the relief of their countrymen. Being now surrounded on all sides, they threw themselves into the hospital of St. James; and, lining the walls of the burying-ground, resisted for some time the united assaults of the whole French army. At length the hospital being set on fire, and the cannon having battered down the walls of the burying-ground, they fought no longer in hopes

of victory; but still resolving to sell their lives as dear as possible, they continued to defend themselves to the last gasp.

Æneas Sylvius (afterwards pope Pius II.) relates, among other actions of singular valor, exerted by this heroic troop, a particular instance which I cannot forbear mentioning. Four French soldiers assaulted a single Swiss, and having killed and stripped him, proceeded to insult the corpse: one of his companions, incensed at this brutal action, seized a battle-ax, rushed upon the four, slew two of them, and drove the others to flight; then flinging the dead body of his friend upon his shoulders, carried it to a place of security; and returning to the attack, fell by the hand of the enemy.

Of the whole number but sixteen escaped from the field of battle; and these, agreeably to the old Spartan discipline, were branded with infamy, for not having sacrificed their lives in defence of their country. Among those who were desperately wounded, and left upon the field of action, only thirty-two were found alive. The names of many of these glorious combatants were carefully registered, and still remain upon record.

It is not easy to ascertain the number of forces on both sides in this ever-memorable engagement. As far as we can judge, by comparing the several relations of the French and German historians, the army of the dauphin consisted of at least thirty thousand. Charles and his son Louis, in their letters to the German princes on this occasion, assert, that three thousand Swiss fell on the field of battle; and perhaps that account is not much exaggerated. With respect to the slain on the side

of the dauphin, the amount is still more uncertain: his loss, however, must have been very considerable, for he remained three days upon the field of battle; and, the better to conceal the number of the killed, he ordered the dead bodies to be secretly interred in different parts of the neighbourhood. Add to this, that he was effectually prevented from prosecuting his designs upon Switzerland, and compelled to retire with his shattered army into Alsace. Louis himself, indeed, declared, that such another victory would ruin his army; and generously confessed, that he derived from it no other advantage, than to know and esteem the valor of the Swiss. Accordingly, this combat may be considered as forming a remarkable era in the history of the Swiss: for, it gave rise to their treaty with Charles the Seventh; the first alliance which they contracted with France.

The war, however, between the House of Austria and Zurich on one side, and the seven cantons on the other, continued until the year 1446, when a peace was concluded by the mediation and decision of certain arbiters: Zurich renounced its connexion with the House of Austria; and the Helvetic Confederacy was again solemnly renewed and confirmed between the eight cantons. Upon this occasion, two very important articles in the public law of Switzerland, were finally settled: First, that all disputes between any particular cantons, should be decided by the mediation of the neutral cantons; and if either of the two contending parties should decline to acquiesce under their judgment, the neutral cantons are empowered to have recourse to arms, in order to

compel the recusant to abide by their determination: Secondly, notwithstanding the right which either of the cantons might have reserved to itself, of contracting alliances with foreign powers, yet the other confederates are to judge, whether such alliance is contradictory to, or incompatible with, the articles of the general union; and if it should appear to be so, it is declared utterly null and void.

The Swiss still talk of this famous action with the warmest enthusiasm. Accordingly, the inhabitants of Basle form parties every year, to an inn situated near the hospital and burying-ground above-mentioned, in order to commemorate, in a red wine produced from some vineyards planted on the field of battle, the heroic deeds of their brave countrymen, who so gloriously sacrificed their lives upon the occasion. This wine, which they call the "*Blood of the Swiss*," is highly prized by the Basileans, though it has little to recommend it in point of flavor; nevertheless, I am much mistaken, if that famous line of Horace,

Non missura cutem nisi plena cruoris,

was more applicable to the teasing poet he mentions, than it is to those jovial patriotic parties, at the anniversary computations of the "*Blood of the Swiss*."

Near Basle are the ruins of *Augusta Rauracorum*, *Augst*, formerly a large town under the dominion of the Romans, now a small village in the canton of Basle, close to the Rhine. Its ancient remains are very inconsiderable, consisting of a few columns of marble, still standing, and some scattered fragments of pillars, together with a

femicircular range of walls upon a rising ground, the greatest part of which has fallen, and is almost entirely overgrown with underwood. From the present appearance of the last-mentioned ruins, I should hardly have conjectured that they once composed part of a theatre, capable of containing above twelve thousand spectators. But the celebrated Schoepflin has given, in his *Alsatia Illustrata*, a particular description of this theatre, and of the temple, to which the marble columns formerly belonged. I noticed also the remains of some small aqueducts, which conveyed water to the town from the distance of above twelve miles: but none of these ancient relics are sufficiently remarkable to merit the trouble of a particular visit.

The peasants, in turning up the ground where these ruins are situated, frequently find medals of the Roman emperors, from Augustus to Constantine; and are become, by repeated experience, able to distinguish, with some degree of precision, those that are rare from the more common coins. I purchased of a laborer two medals, which he had just found; a Trajan and an Albinus: and though the former was by far the most perfect, yet he exacted three times as much for the latter, because he had never seen it, he said, before.

From Bâle I made an excursion to Mulhausen, a town in alliance with the Swiss cantons; which, though situated at the distance of several miles from the frontiers of Switzerland, and entirely enclosed within the dominions of France, is yet considered and respected as a part of the Helvetic Confederacy; and entitled to all the privileges enjoyed by that body.

Mulhausen stands in Sundgau, a district of Alsace, about fifteen miles from Basle; in a fertile plain, at the bottom of a ridge of hills, and at a small distance from the Voges. The walls of the town enclose a circumference of not more than two miles, and its whole territory is comprised within a precinct of eight miles.

This little republic maintained its privileges, which had been granted by the emperors, during the times of feudal tyranny, by contracting an alliance, at different intervals, with Basle, Strasburgh, and the towns of Alsace and Suabia; and afterwards, in the middle of the fifteenth century, with Berne, Friburgh, and Soleure. At length, in 1515, it was received into the Helvetic Confederacy; which league has preserved its liberty and independence from the encroachments of the empire, on one hand, and, on the other, from the attacks of France. The inhabitants are of the Reformed religion. The town contains about eight hundred houses, and six thousand souls, and there are two thousand subjects in the villages within its little territory. Mulhausen owes its present flourishing state, to its manufactures, which consist principally of printed linens and cottons.

The government is aristo-democratical. The supreme power resides in the Great and Little Councils, consisting both together of seventy-eight persons, and drawn from the burghers whose number amounts to seven hundred, distributed into six tribes.

Mr. Koehlin's commercial school deserves to be mentioned. It is a private institution for about thirty scholars, who are instructed in the German, French, and Latin languages; in fencing, dancing,

and all polite accomplishments; and more particularly in accounts and book-keeping. The expense, including an uniform, amounts to *L. 50 per annum*. The plan is very judicious, and the whole appeared to me to be well conducted.

LETTER 18.

Bishopric of Basle—Porentru—Abbey of Bellelay—Arlesheim—Delmont—Valley of Munster—Pierre Pertuis—Valley of St. Imier.

ALTHOUGH the greatest part of the dominions subject to the bishop of Basle, or, as he is called by the Protestants, the Prince of Porentru, is not comprised within the limits of Switzerland; yet as, till lately, he was in alliance with the Catholic cantons, and as many of his subjects, even in those districts which lie within the German empire, are comburghers with Berne, and under the protection of that republic, his territory is usually included in all the topographical accounts of Switzerland. It merits also the notice of the traveller for its romantic scenes, of the mineralogist for the variety of its petrifications and fossils, and of the politician for the peculiarity of its government, and the numerous and complicated immunities of the people.

Having made various excursions into this country, I shall lay before you a general account of its political state, and a particular description of those parts which I had an opportunity of visiting.

The bishopric of Basle may be classed under two general divisions: the first lies to the south of Pierre Pertuis, and forms a part of Switzerland; the second, to the north of the same boundary, includes that district situated within the German empire.

The sovereign of this country is chosen by the chapter of eighteen canons, resident at Arlesheim, and confirmed by the pope. He is prince of the German empire; and does homage to the emperor for that part of his territory which lies in the Circle of the Upper Rhine. He was always considered as an ally of the Swiss, by his union with the Catholic cantons, first formed in 1579, and renewed at different intervals, particularly in 1671 and 1697; and by being included in the treaty which those cantons contracted with France in 1715. But as he was not comprised among the allies of the Swiss, in the league between the thirteen cantons and Louis the Sixteenth, in 1777, he can at present scarcely be esteemed a member of the Helvetic Confederacy.

The first particular alliance with France was concluded in 1739, between the bishop and Louis the Fifteenth; and was renewed in 1780. By virtue of this treaty the bishop has troops in the French service; and his subjects enjoy all the privileges which are granted to the natives of the thirteen cantons.

In case of a rupture between France and the Empire, he is bound to remain neuter. But this neutrality did not, in 1675, prevent the French troops from being quartered in his dominions, as forming part of the empire; and they were only removed at the intercession of the Catholic cantons. If a misunderstanding should arise between France

and the Emperor, the bishop's situation would be extremely embarrassing; as his doubtful connexion with the Swifs would scarcely preserve his territory from being invaded by one of those two powers.

The form of government is a limited monarchy: the bishop being bound, on all important occasions, to consult his chapter; and his prerogative being confined by the great immunities enjoyed by his subjects in general, and particularly by those of the Reformed communion. He nominates to all employments, both civil and military, and appoints the bailifs or governors; criminal justice is administered in his name; and he has the power of pardoning. In civil proceedings, he receives an appeal from the inferior courts; but in his German dominions, when the cause exceeds the value of a stipulated sum, it may be carried to the chambers of Wetzlar or Vienna.

The subjects of the bishop are partly Protestants and partly Catholics. The Protestants, of whom a more particular account will be given, inhabit the greatest part of the valley of Munster, and the whole district to the south of Pierre Pertuis, and are about 15,000; the Catholics amount to 35,000.

The French and German languages being both spoken in the bishop's dominions, several places have two names, that scarcely resemble each other; namely, *Munster* and *Moitier*, *Dachfeld* and *Tavannes*, *Delmont* and *Delsberg*, *Corrandelin* and *Rennendorf*, *Elay* and *Seehof*.

Porentru, capital of the bishop's dominions, and his principal residence, is situated in the bailliage of Elsgau, about three miles from the frontiers of France. It is a small but neat town; and its position, in an oval plain, surrounded by well-wooded hills,

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and watered by a serpentine rivulet, is exceedingly pleasant. The episcopal palace, which has been lately repaired and augmented, stands on an eminence overlooking the town, and the environs fertile in corn and pasture. One of the towers, built of stone, and said to be of Roman workmanship, still remains a monument of its antiquity.

The high roads, which lead from all quarters to Porentru, and have been formed at a considerable expense, do honor to the sovereigns of this country. The way to Bellelay and Bienne, is a magnificent causeway: it traverses a mountainous district; is carried over hanging terraces; through "twilight groves," and along continued acclivities and declivities. I pursued the latter part by moonlight; and the reflection of the rays quivering through the thick foliage was inconceivably beautiful.

Bellelay, which I visited in my journey from Bienne to Porentru, is a rich abbey of Benedictines, about twenty miles from the capital, in a solitary but not unpleasant situation, surrounded by mountains, and sheltered by forests. This abbey is not merely confined to religious purposes; the late abbot, Nicholas de Luce, having instituted a military academy, for the young nobility and gentry. For this purpose he erected a large building near the abbey, and provided suitable masters and professors. When I was there, the number of scholars amounted to forty. They are instructed in various branches of polite literature; they wear uniforms; and are trained to military manœuvres and exercises. The cheapness of this school, and its distance from the dissipation of large towns, renders it of great public utility. The whole expense of each scholar, for his board, lodging, instruction, and

various lessons, scarcely exceeds *L. 20 per annum*. It is curious to find a military academy established in the midst of rocks and forests, and within the walls of a convent; and to observe Benedictine friars, instead of wasting their time in monkish ignorance and superstition, rendering themselves beneficial to society.

The chapter, composed of eighteen canons, who, upon a vacancy in the see, possess the right of electing the bishop, was fixed at Friburgh in Brisgau from the period of the reformation, which drove them from Basle, to 1677, when Friburgh was occupied by the French troops. In the following year the chapter was transferred to Arlesheim, where it now resides. The vacant canonries are filled alternately by the pope and chapter.

On the 14th of August 1786, I made an excursion, in company with several friends, to Arlesheim, which is a small but agreeably situated place, almost four miles from Basle. We had the honor of dining with the Baron de Ligertz, one of the canons. After a repast, no less elegant than agreeable, our host politely accompanied us to a garden styled *The Hermitage*, about a quarter of a mile from Arlesheim; which was laid out at the joint expense of the baron and of Madame d'Andlau, the bailif's lady, with a view to employ the poor in a time of great scarcity, and to provide walks for the inhabitants of the town. The grounds are very extensive, and pleasant. The walks are carried along the sides of the rocks, which are richly wooded, and through a delightful semicircular plain, bounded by fertile hills, and watered by a small lake, the borders of which are peculiarly wild and picturesque. Several caverns, hollowed

and arched by the hand of nature, add to the romantic singularity of the scenery; while many transparent fireams, conveyed from a considerable distance, fall in small cascades, or bubble from the ground like real springs. A fastidious observer might perhaps remark of this enchanting spot, that in a few circumstances nature has been too much sacrificed to art; and that there are some buildings less calculated to please than to surprise.

The following elegant inscription for this charming hermitage was extemporarily composed by professor Oberlin of Strasburgh, one of our party.

HOSPES · AMICE,
HASCE · DELICIAS.
NATURÆ · DEBES ·
DEBES · INDUSTRIÆ ·
BALBINÆ · AB · ANDLAV.
HENRICI · A · LIGERTZ.

I shall close this letter with an account of my journey from Basle to Bienne, through the vallies of Lauffen, Delmont, Munster, and St. Imier, a tract of country in the bishopric of Basle, which is not inferior in beauty to the most delightful parts of Switzerland.

We quitted Basle early in the morning; and passed through a fertile plain watered by the Birs, and bounded by two chains of the Jura; one whereof terminates abruptly, supporting on its summit the castle of Wertenburgh. As we continued our route, the plain gradually narrowed; the mountains approached each other; and we entered the rich valley of Lauffen, enclosed between the rocks, sprinkled with groves of oak and

beech, and exhibiting many romantic points of view. Lauffen, which gives name to the valley, has its own magistrates, and inferior courts of justice. The natives are industrious: those who are not employed in agriculture, gain a comfortable livelihood from making cloth, spinning yarn, and knitting worsted stockings. The inhabitants of the valley talk German, and those of Sautier, a small neighbouring village, French, which language is spoken through the vallies of Delmont, Munster, and St. Imier.

About three leagues from Lauffen we came to a narrow pass, entered the valley of Delmont, near Sautier; quitted the high road, and gently ascended to Delmont, which stands pleasantly on an acclivity, backed by a ridge of rocks embrowned with firs.

In this small town reside the provost and canons, who compose the chapter formerly established at Munster; which was removed here, in 1630, on the introduction of the Reformed religion in the valley of Munster. At the extremity of the town is the episcopal palace, built in 1718, by Conrad Baron of Reinach, and bishop of Basle: it commands a fine view of the adjacent country. The bailif, who holds his court in this town, has jurisdiction over the valleys of Delmont and Munster. In criminal proceedings he arrests and examines; and can inflict small penalties for trifling misdemeanors; but in all cases of notoriety, the delinquent is either tried at Porentru, or the bailif's sentence must be confirmed or amended in that supreme tribunal. Civil causes are first adjudged in the provincial courts; from whose decision an appeal lies to the episcopal tribunal at Porentru; and from thence to the imperial chambers of Wetzlar or Vienna.

Delmont contains eight hundred inhabitants, who are all Catholics: they have their own magistrates and inferior tribunals.

About a mile from Delmont I stopped at Corrandelin, a small village in the Catholic district of the valley of Munster, in order to examine an iron foundery belonging to the bishop. The ore is drawn from the valley of Delmont, near the villages of Corou, Wick, Recolens, and Sepres; it is taken from the ground in small pieces, seldom larger than the size of a pea. The director informed me, that it is usually found in that state, and very rarely in masses. The largest he ever remembered to have seen, was ten feet long, two thick, and two broad. He added, that the mountains in the neighbourhood abound with ore, which would yield considerable quantities of iron, if sufficient charcoal could be procured for the smelting furnaces. As he was but lately appointed director, he could not give any accurate intelligence concerning the annual quantity of iron smelted in this foundery; but informed me, in general, that the different ores yielded altogether two thirds of pure mineral, the quality whereof was extremely fine, and scarcely inferior to the best sort exported from Sweden.

Corrandelin, together with the villages of Châtillon, Rossémaison, Vellerat, Courchappois, Corbaon, Mervellier, and Elay, though connected as to ecclesiastical affairs with the valley of Delmont, form that part of the valley of Munster, which is called the *Catholic*, or *Lower District*. It is denominated the *Catholic District*, because the inhabitants are exclusively of the Romish church; and *Lower District*, because it is situated

unter den felsen, or *below* the ridge of rocks which separate it from the *Upper*, or *Protestant* District. But before I proceed further, it will be necessary to describe the general divisions of this valley, and the civil and religious immunities of the natives, that you may be enabled to comprehend its complicated topography, and its curious political state, by which, though subject to the bishop of Basle, it is under the protection of the canton of Berne.

The valley of Munster, or Moitier, extends from the valley of Delmont to Pierre Pertuis; and is included in that part of the bishop's dominions which lie within the German empire. But, as the inhabitants have, for above three hundred years, been in alliance with Berne, and under the protection of that republic, the valley is considered by many authors as forming part of Switzerland. It is divided into two principal districts; the *Catholic* or *Lower* District, which lies at the extremity of the valley of Delmont, and comprises the eight villages above-mentioned; the *Protestant* or *Upper* District, which stretches from the chain of rocks near Corrandelin, to Pierre Pertuis, its southern boundary; and containing, 1. The Greater Valley, or Valley of Tavannes; and 2. The Lesser Valley, which is subdivided into Grand-Val, or the Great Valley, and the Little Valley, or the Valley of Sornetan.

The inhabitants of both districts are comburghers with the canton of Berne. The first treaty of comburghership was contracted in 1484. In that year, Berne and the bishop of Basle respectively supporting two candidates for the provostship of Munster; the former marched an army into these parts, took possession

possession of the whole valley, and exacted homage from the inhabitants. These disputes being compromised at the treaty of Corrandelin, Berne restored the valley to the bishop on the following conditions: that the inhabitants should be maintained in all their privileges; continue as comburghers with Berne, under the protection of that republic; remain neuter in case of a war between Berne and the bishop; and follow the standard of Berne, when the latter was engaged in hostilities against any other power. The treaty of comburghership, renewed at different intervals, has excited frequent disputes between Berne and the bishop, and particularly in 1705 and 1711 occasioned an open rupture. These disputes were finally adjusted at the pacification of Arau; when the bishop ratified the treaty of comburghership, confirmed all the rights and immunities of the inhabitants, and consented to the mediation and interference of Berne.

The affairs of religion excited for some time no less contest between the bishop and Berne than the treaty of comburghership. The reformation being adopted, in 1531, by a considerable number of the inhabitants in the valley of Munster, civil commotions ensued; Berne interfered in behalf of the Protestants, and the bishop protected the ancient church establishment. It was at length, however, amicably settled between both parties; that the majority of each parish should freely decide, whether the inhabitants should profess the Roman catholic or the Reformed religion; and that the chapter of Munster should continue to receive the tithes, on condition of discharging the salaries of the Protestant ministers. In consequence of this

rational compromise, the eight villages, which now form the *Lower* district, voted for the maintenance of the Catholic religion; and the parishes of the upper district for the Reformed church. Accordingly the two persuasions were respectively established in these two districts; the chapter retained its estates and tithes, but quitting Munster, where the new doctrines were admitted, retired first to Soleure, and afterwards settled at Delmont: but, as several Protestants and Catholics continued promiscuously to inhabit the two districts, disturbances were occasionally renewed. Nor were the religious differences entirely composed till the peace of Arau; which enjoined, that all the members of the two persuasions should be finally separated; that all the inhabitants of the *Upper* district, who then professed or should hereafter profess the Catholic religion, should retire to Elay; and that in the same manner the Protestants in the *Lower* district should remove to the *Upper* district. Since this period, the most perfect harmony has subsisted between them.

By virtue of the alliance with Berne, that republic annually deputed one of its magistrates to this valley for the purpose of inquiring if the civil and religious immunities have been preserved inviolate, and an ecclesiastic: the latter, called inspector of the churches in the valley of Munster, examines into the state of ecclesiastical discipline; and distributes among the inhabitants of the *Upper* district catechisms and psalters. Berne also approves the nomination of the ministers to the vacant benefices, some of whom are appointed and paid by the bishop, others by the chapters of Delmont and Bellelay; as the bishop or chapters possess the tithes in the respective parishes.

But to return from this digression. — Soon after quitting Corrandelin, I entered the *Protestant* district, through a pass between two rocks, which nearly approach each other, and just leave an opening sufficient for the Birs and the road. This pass leads into a narrow glen, about four miles in length, and in many places almost resembling a subterraneous abyfs. The road winds by the side of the impetuous Birs, and at the bottom of two ranges of rocks: these rocks are of white limestone, of inaccessible height; and though in most places absolutely perpendicular, yet are agreeably feathered with trees, and particularly towards their summits, which over-hang, and scarcely admit the light of the sun. In the midst of this glen is La Roche, the first Protestant village in the valley of Munster; the houses whereof stand on both sides of the Birs, where the rocks recede a little, and present a gentle slope.

On issuing from this glen, we entered a fertile plain encircled by hills, in the midst of which is situated the village of Munster or Moitier: it takes that appellation from the chapter of canons, who, upon the reformation, quitted this place of their residence and settled themselves at Delmont.

About half a mile from Munster we came into another glen, near three miles in length: it is called *Chaluet*, of a similar nature with that which we traversed between Corrandelin and the plain of Munster, but still wilder and more craggy, deeper and more obscure. It is also divided by the Birs, which rushes through it with great impetuosity; and is so narrow, that the road occupies the whole space between the torrent and the mountain, and the wheels of our carriage frequently on one side

brushed the rock, and on the other ran close to the precipice which overhangs the river. This causeway, over broken crags and steep precipices, does honor to the prince who carried it into execution. The following inscription, which I observed near a bridge in the midst of this obscure glen, may perhaps seem exaggerated, to a person unacquainted with the natural impediments of the country; but to me, on the spot, appeared strictly consonant to truth.

*Josephus Gulielmus
Ex Rinchnis de Baldenstein
Basilienſium Episcopus Princeps
Viam Veteribus Includam
Rupibus et Claustris Montium Ruptis
Birſâ Pontibus Stratâ
Opere Romanis Digno
Aperuit.
Anno. D. M.DCC.LII.*

Although in various parts of Switzerland I had frequently observed the justness of the remark, that in all deep vallies which intersect the mountains, the salient angles on one side alternately correspond with the cavities on the other; and that parallel strata of rock answer to each other, in all directions and at all heights; yet I never saw this fact more strongly exemplified than in the two ridges of lime-stone that border this glen. They are of a stupendous height; and the strata horizontal, inclined, or almost perpendicular on one side, are exactly similar and of the same thickness on the other: a circumstance, which, joined to the corresponding situation of the angles, seems to prove, that

they were formerly united, and have been either rent asunder by some sudden convulsion, or separated by the gradual attrition of the waters.

At the extremity of the Chaluët we entered another plain, well cultivated, and agreeably spotted with villages; and arrived towards the close of the evening at Molleray, where we passed the night. The people in these parts appear happy and contented, and are extremely industrious. The greatest part are employed in agriculture; a few, encouraged by their neighbours of Locle and Chaux de Fond, have lately introduced several trades into these mountains; and Belleval, a small neighbouring village, already contains five watch-makers.

From Molleray we continued along a fertile plain by the side of the Birs; through several pleasant and well-looking villages, of which Tavannes, in German *Dachfeld*, is the largest. In about two miles we arrived at the extremity of the plain, which is closed by a rock, through which opens the celebrated pass called *Pierre Pertuis*. At the bottom of this rock, the Birs bursts from the ground in several copious springs, and turns two mills within a few paces of its principal source.

Pierre Pertuis is a large arched aperture through a solid rock, about thirty feet long, forty-five broad, and thirty high in the lowest part, which some aver to have been formed by nature, others by art. A Roman inscription over the arch, extremely defaced, has given sufficient employment to the ingenuity of antiquaries. Having seen several fac-similes, greatly

differing from each other, I copied it as exactly as the height would permit.

AVMINI AVGS
IM
CTA PER
O\ VM PATER.
IVI COL. HELV.

Of this inscription many solutions have been attempted; but the most probable are the two following:

*Numini Augustorum via facta per Titum Du-
nium Paternum virum Colon Helvet.* — Others
read, *per montem durvum Paternus.*

Both these solutions imply, that a road was formed through the mountain by Paternus, a duumvir, during the reigns of Marcus Aurelius and Verus. From the latter explanation, *per montem durvum*, some antiquarians have endeavoured to prove, that he cut through the rock; and consequently, that the arch is the work of art, not of nature: while others maintain, that it by no means follows, even from this reading, that the rock was pierced by order of Paternus; but merely that the road was carried through the rock⁴. Not to detain you, however, with fanciful conjectures, I shall only add, that on examining the inscription with attention, the words which antiquarians have supplied, to support their particular systems, are extremely doubtful; and that

⁴ The reader, who wishes to examine this subject with attention, is referred to Schœpflin's *Alsatia Illustrata*, and to a dissertation on the subject published by Buxtorf.

to me, who observed the arch without partiality or prejudice in favor of any hypothesis, it appeared to have been originally a great cavern, either totally formed by nature, or if assisted by art, that only a small part of its southern extremity was opened by the labor of men.

The southern extremity of *Pierre Pertuis* leads into the valley of St. Imier, sometimes called Erguel, which comprises the bishop's dominions lying in Switzerland. The inhabitants are Protestants, and governed by a bailif appointed by the bishop. He resides at Courtelari; but his authority is exceedingly limited by the various privileges; both civil and religious, possessed by the natives. Their religious immunities, confirmed by the bishop, are guaranteed by the four Reformed cantons. The whole district lies within the Jura mountains; and is fertile in pasture. The inhabitants are industrious.

On arriving on the extremity of mount Jura, a glorious prospect bursts upon the view, commanding the undulating country fertilized by the Aar, backed by the majestic chain of Alps extending beyond the frontiers of Savoy. Descending gently into the plain with this glorious prospect before us, and which was heightened by the luminous splendor of the mid-day sun, we crossed the Sure, and finished our delightful expedition at Bienne.

From Pierre Pertuis to Bienne, a superb causeway is carried along a continual descent for about six miles; it winds through thick forests, and overhangs the deep abyss, in which the Sure, a turbid and impetuous torrent, precipitates its course, always roaring, and frequently unseen, in its rocky channel.

LETTER 19,

The Town of Bienne.

THE small territory of Bienne, containing scarcely six thousand inhabitants, lies between the lake and a chain of the Jura mountains: it is surrounded by the cantons of Berne and Soleure, the bishopric of Basle, and the principality of Neuchatel. The town is situated at the foot of the Jura, and at a little distance from the lake; which is here about nine miles in length, and four in breadth: the borders are pleasing and picturesque; and the town of Nidau forms a very beautiful object upon its eastern side.

The bishop of Basle is the sovereign of this little state: his power, formerly considerable, is at present exceedingly limited. Indeed the constitution of Bienne is of so very peculiar a nature, that I know not well by what name it can be distinguished: it cannot properly be called either a limited monarchy, or an independent republic; but seems rather to be a mixed government, partaking somewhat of both.

The bishop of Basle receives, upon his promotion to the bishopric, the homage of the citizens and militia of this town, with all the apparent ceremonials of the most absolute submission; but at the same time, he confirms, in the strongest manner, all their privileges and franchises. He is represented by a mayor of his own appointing, whose power and office consist in convoking, and presiding in, the Little Council, as the chief court of justice; in collecting the suffrages, and declaring

the sentence; but without giving any vote himself. And, although justice is carried on, and executed, in the name of the bishop, yet neither that prince nor the mayor, has the prerogative of pardoning criminals, or of mitigating the sentence. All causes, civil as well as criminal, are brought before this council in the first instance; and in more important proceedings, an appeal lies to the Sovereign Council: in both cases, each party chuses a member of the council to act as his advocate; which office he is obliged to discharge without fee or recompence.

The sovereign's revenue amounts only to about *L.* 300 a year: but, mean as his civil list is, it is still more considerable than his power; for he does not possess the least share of the administration. The legislative authority resides in the Great and Little Councils combined: the former consists of forty members; and the latter, in which the executive power is vested, is composed of twenty-four; the members of each must be married men. Both these councils elect their respective members; and so far the constitution is entirely aristocratical. The burgomaster, or chief of the regency, is chosen by the two councils, and presides at their meetings. He continues in office during life; in which, however, he, as well as the several magistrates, must be confirmed annually by the two councils. The salaries annexed to these posts are exceedingly moderate: and, indeed, the general expenses of government are so very small, that, in proportion to them, its revenues may well be considered as abundantly ample.

It appears, therefore, that this Protestant republic, notwithstanding the sovereignty of its

Catholic bishop, enjoys in the fullest extent the power of imposing taxes, contracting alliances, declaring war and peace; and, in short, of exercising every other act of absolute and independent legislation. This singular constitution is guarantied by Berne, Friburgh, and Soleure, with whom the town is closely allied; in consequence of which, it becomes a member of the Helvetic Confederacy. And, what is somewhat remarkable, this alliance between those cantons and the town of Bienne, is of a superior nature to that of the same cantons with the bishop of Basle: for the town enjoys the right of sending deputies to every general diet, ordinary and extraordinary; whereas the bishop does not possess the same privilege.

The language of the country is a kind of provincial German; but, as the territory borders upon the principality of Neuchatel, the inhabitants speak also a kind of corrupted French. They are a very active and industrious people: several manufactures are established in the town, which considering its size, carries on a tolerable trade.

I have often had occasion to observe, that the common people of Switzerland are far more intelligent than the same rank of men in any other country. Accordingly, I invited last night my landlord of the Crown inn to sup with me; and found him by no means disposed to be a silent guest. He gave me a long account of the late ceremony, when the citizens did homage to their new bishop. I was pleased to hear him expatiate, with all the enthusiasm of national pride, upon the beauty and grandeur of the scene; the magnificence of the procession; the number of spectators, as well strangers as natives, who were

assembled; together with the entertainments and balls that were given upon that occasion. By the lofty terms in which he spoke of this procession, you would have imagined, at least, that he had been describing the coronation of the emperor of Germany, or the king of France: and, in truth, to an inhabitant of Bienne, whose government is administered without the least degree of external pomp, and where luxury has as yet made but little progress, the ceremony must have appeared a very striking spectacle. My host's narrative recalled to my remembrance the accounts of those ancient feudal sovereignties, when the great vassals of the crown did homage to their liege lord; and, while in *terms* they promised him unlimited obedience, maintained, in *fact*, every essential of independence.

I have just been amusing myself in some pleasant walks, that lie by the side of the lake, which is here prettily skirted with country houses. In my way I passed over a plain between the town and the lake, which the Sovereign Council, by a kind of agrarian law that does honor to the legislature, lately allotted, in distinct portions, to each burgher, for his own particular use: it is entirely laid out in little kitchen-gardens. The general government, indeed, of this miniature state, is well administered. It has lately adopted the liberal policy of conferring the burghership at an easy rate: a wise regulation, which cannot fail of increasing the population of the town, and extending its commerce.

I know your sentiments much too well, my dear sir, to apologize for calling your attention in the present instance, as in some others, to these diminutive commonwealths. The various

modifications of government, into which civil society is divided, is a speculation that will always afford matter both of entertainment and reflection, to a philosophic mind: and I am persuaded, that you consider the meanest spot of this globe consecrated by liberty, to be an object worthy, not only of your curiosity, but your veneration.

I am, &c.

LETTER 20.

The Town and Canton of Soleure — Detail of the Government — Ancient and New Burghers — Assembly of the Rosengarten.

THE direct road from Basle to Soleure lies through the midst of the Jura mountains, along the romantic vale of Balstal, remarkable for its richness and fertility: and though the country is in general exceedingly rocky, yet in many places it is highly cultivated.

The road from Bienne to Soleure traverses a well-cultivated valley, watered by the Aar, at the foot of a piked ridge, which forms a branch of mount Jura; its sides, from the bottom to the summit, are so embrowned with overhanging forests of pine and fir, as to exhibit only occasional intervals of naked rock, remains of torrents, and a few solitary specks of pasture, and are so steep as, within the extent of five leagues, scarcely to display the appearance of a single house, or a trace of the slightest foot-way. Near Soleure this chain of the Jura, called *Weissenstein*, abruptly

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diminishes in height, becomes gradually sloping, and is checkered to its very summit with fields of corn and pasture.

Soleure is pleasantly situated upon the Aar, which here expands its banks and opens into a fine and broad river. I will not exert the privilege of a traveller, and tell you, what some extravagant antiquarians do not scruple to assert, that Soleure was built by the patriarch Abraham; but you will have no difficulty, perhaps, in believing what others maintain, that it was one of the twelve towns which were destroyed upon the emigration of the original inhabitants into Gaul. But at what time, and upon whatsoever occasion, its destruction happened; it appears probable, from a great number of inscriptions, medals, and other antiquities, which have been found in the neighbourhood, that it was re-peopled by a Roman colony; and it certainly was a Roman fortification, as its ancient appellation, *Castrum Salodurense*, necessarily implies.

Little more of its history is known, during that period of ignorance and barbarism which succeeded the downfall of the Roman empire, than that it was sacked and destroyed by those northern nations, who over-ran the greatest part of Europe. From the time of its re-establishment, until its admission into the Helvetic Confederacy in 1481, its state was similar to that of many other imperial towns, which acquired a gradual accession of territory, and after various struggles finally secured to themselves an absolute independence.

Soleure is a small but extremely neat town, and is surrounded by regular stone fortifications, erected in the beginning of the present century;

these walls enclose a circumference of scarcely more than fifty square acres, and, including the suburbs, contain about four thousand souls. Among the most remarkable objects of curiosity in the town is the new church of St. Urs, which was begun in 1762, and finished in 1772. It is a noble edifice, of whitish-grey stone, drawn from the neighbouring quarries, which admits a polish, and is a species of rude marble. The lower part of the building is of the Corinthian, the upper of the Composite order: the façade, which consists of a portico, surmounted by an elegant tower, presents itself finely at the extremity of the principal street. Pizoni was the architect, and the expense amounted to at least *L.* 80,000; a considerable sum for so small a republic, whose revenues scarcely surpass *L.* 12000 *per annum*. The interior is simple yet elegant, and decorated with a few modern paintings of inconsiderable merit; of which the most esteemed is the last supper, by Corvi, a Roman artist. A picture by Rubens and his scholars, in the church of the Cordeliers, and one by Le Sueur, in that of the Capuchins, deserve perhaps to be noticed by the traveller, who is fond of the fine arts. The town-house is not in itself worthy of observation, but is mentioned only as being the place of meeting for the Great Council and Senate. The public prison, newly constructed, is a solid edifice of stone, and is well adapted to the purpose of the building; the prisoners being confined in separate cells. Although the penal laws are severe in theory, yet the judicial sentences, in criminal affairs, are so remarkably mild, that a prisoner, on his acquittal, wrote the following inscription on the wall of his cell: "He who is inclined to

“rob, and escape hanging; let him rob in the
“canton of Soleure.”

The public library deserves to be mentioned, not for the number or rarity of the volumes, but for the literary zeal of the Abbé Herman, canon of the cathedral, to whom it owes its origin. On my first visit to this town, in 1776, there was no public collection of books; but a few years ago that ingenious ecclesiastic amassed about four hundred volumes from his own and his friends stock, obtained from government an apartment in the town-house, where he deposited them, and requested to be appointed librarian, but without a salary. His petition being granted, he continued to augment his little collection; and from this small beginning has increased it already to eleven thousand books, among which are above a hundred and fifty printed in the fifteenth century. At the two extremities of the room are inscribed the names of the benefactors to this library. As yet there is no fund established for the support or augmentation of this collection.

The Abbé has also begun to form a cabinet of medals; which, though at present extremely small, will increase like the library. He pointed out to me a very rare medal, that was discovered in digging the foundation for the new cathedral. It is in bronze, of the middle size. On one side is the head of Septimius Severus, with the following inscription, *L. Septimius Severus Pius Aug. P. M. Tr. P. xviii. Cof. iii. P. P.* On the reverse, a figure sitting, before it a prow of a ship, and a genius or little boy. Great merit is due to the Abbé for having given birth to this collection, at first alone and unsupported, and in so disinterested a manner, as his income does not exceed L. 60

per annum ; and in a town where literature is not much encouraged. This learned ecclesiastic is now employed in writing an account of Soleure at the period of the Reformation ; and is collecting ample materials for a complete history of the canton.

With respect to natural history, the only cabinet in the town is that formed by Senator Wallier : it is a small collection, but well chosen, and particularly interesting to the naturalist who travels into these parts, because the ingenious collector has chiefly confined himself to the minerals and petrifications of the canton.

The circumjacent country is exceedingly pleasing and diversified, and exhibits several points of view, which are as agreeable as wild, and as pleasing as romantic. Among these we were particularly struck with the situation of the hermitage called des Croix, about half a mile from the town, near the stone quarry : it is a most agreeable recess at the extremity of a small wood, and between two ridges of bare perpendicular rocks, watered by a lively stream ; one extremity is closed by a small wood, and the other opens into fertile grounds backed by the dark Jura. Among the villas, in the environs, remarkable for their position, may be mentioned Ricaberg, built by Mr. de Vigur ; it stands at the bottom of a gentle hill, declining towards the winding Aar, and commands a view of Soleure, half hid by the intervening trees ; and Bleikenberg, belonging to Major de Roll, situated amid waving grounds divided into enclosures, similar to the fertile counties of England ; the dark Jura rising like the highlands of Scotland ; and at a distance the sublime alps, which characterize this romantic country.

The

The canton of Soleure, which holds the eleventh rank in the Helvetic Confederacy, stretches partly through the plain, and partly along the chains of the Jura, and contains about 50,000 souls, including the inhabitants of the capital. The soil is, for the most part, exceedingly fertile in corn, and those districts which lie within the Jura, abound in excellent pastures. The trade, both of the town and of the canton, is of little value, although they are very commodiously situated for an extensive commerce. It is divided into eleven districts or bailliages, called Interior and Exterior; the former are governed by bailifs, who are senators, and remain in the towns: the latter, by bailifs drawn from the members of the Great Council, who reside in their bailliages.

The following is a list of the bailliages, with their average annual value; the four first are interior, the remainder exterior.

Buchegberg	L. 166	Bechburgh	L. 750
Kriegstetten	- 146	Goefgen	- - 500
Laeberen, or		Olten	- - - 333
Grenche	- 83	Dornach	- - 834
Flumenthal	- 62	Thierstein	- - 417
Falkenstein	- 546	Gilgenberg	- 375

The inhabitants of the canton are Catholics, excepting those in the bailliage of Buchegberg, who profess the Reformed religion. In spiritual affairs, the Catholics depend on three bishops: the greatest part of the capital, the bailliages of Laeberen and Flumenthal, are in the diocese of the bishop of Lausanne, resident at Friburgh; the remainder of the capital, the bailliage of

Kriegsfletten, and the villages in the bailliage of Olten, in that of the bishop of Constance; while the other bailliages, and the town of Olten, depend on the bishop of Basle. But neither of these bishops can issue any ordinance, or even visit their dioceses, without the approbation of the Senate. There are two chapters in this canton; one at Soleure, founded, in 930, by Queen Bertha, widow of Rhodolph II. King of Burgundy, is composed of a provost, whose salary amounts to *L. 360 per annum*; and of eleven canons, each of whom enjoy a revenue of *L. 160*. The provost is chosen by the Senate, and the canons are appointed alternately by the Pope and Senate. The other chapter, of Schœnenwerth, founded by the ancient counts of Falkenstein, consists of a provost and five canons, nominated by the Senate. The annual salary of the provost is *L. 125*, and of each canon *L. 100*. There are also one abbey of Benedictines, four convents, and three nunneries: the revenues of these religious houses amount to *L. 2,250*.

The principal charitable institutions are, an hospital at Soleure, and another at Olten, for the reception of burghers, subjects, and foreigners; the foundation of Thurigan, for old persons of both sexes, belonging to the burghership; a foundling hospital for orphans, and for children of poor burghers; and the hospital of St. Catharine, for the insane and incurables.

The only persons in the canton of Soleure, who profess the Reformed religion, are those who inhabit the bailliage of Buchegberg. In ecclesiastical affairs, the inhabitants, though subject to Soleure, are under the protection of Berne. Formerly this complication of political and religious

interests created frequent misunderstandings between the two cantons, but matters were amicably and finally adjusted, on the 18th of November 1681, at the treaty of Winingen. The inhabitants take the oath of fidelity, every third year, to the government of Soleure; but if aggrieved in their religious establishment, can have recourse to Berne. The Senate of Berne nominates to the vacant benefices, but the priests are under the necessity of obtaining the confirmation of the chapter of Soleure. A deputy from Berne presents the new minister to his parishioners; but the bailif is obliged to be present at this ceremony, as deputy from the republic of Soleure. Berne enjoys also supreme jurisdiction in criminal affairs. If a criminal is arrested for any capital offence, he is tried by the bailif of Buckegberg, and the jury of the bailliage: and, if condemned to death, he is delivered for execution to Berne, provided that republic defrays the expense of the trial. Soleure enjoys all the other rights of sovereignty; such as the power of levying taxes, appeals in the last resort; and even decides all matrimonial and ecclesiastical concerns, with this proviso, that the decision shall be regulated according to the articles of the treaty of Winingen. Among the natives in the canton, several inhabiting the bailliages of Thierstein and Gildenberg were serfs, but, in 1785, their servitude, so contrary to the principles of that equal liberty which pervades this country, was abolished, to the honor of the present government.

The canton furnishes France with two companies for the Swiss guards, and several companies in the different marching regiments, according to the capitulation concluded between the King of France

and the Catholic cantons, and their co-allies, in 1764, for the term of twenty-five years. It has also a regiment in the Spanish service; of which the colonel and the companies of fusileers can be filled only by the *ancient* burghers.

With respect to the militia of the canton, all the subjects, from the age of fifteen to that of sixty, are enrolled into six regiments, forming altogether about 8000 men, exclusive of 240 dragoons, and the corps of artillery, amounting to 600 men. The colonel of each regiment is always a senator, and the major a member of the Great Council, who is usually an officer retired from foreign service; the captains are either members of the Great Council or *ancient* burghers; the first lieutenants are usually *ancient* burghers, while the rank of second lieutenants and ensigns is usually filled by the principal peasants.

The militia are assembled and reviewed in May and September; and in the spring and autumn are exercised in their respective villages by the under-lieutenants and ensigns. According to a plan of defence, regulated in 1668, between the members of the Helvetic Confederacy, the canton of Soleure is bound to furnish 600 for its first contingency; for this supply 100 men, together with officers, are annually selected from each of the six regiments, who are to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's warning. In case of necessity, this contingency may be doubled or tripled in the same manner. The burghers are incorporated in the company of fusileers, and exercise themselves on Sundays and saints days, after divine service, by shooting at marks: government furnishes powder and ball, and distributes prizes to the best marksmen.

The remaining inhabitants of the capital and environs, who are not burghers, form a separate body, commanded by the captain of the town: they are also occasionally exercised, and mount guard on the day of St. John the Baptist, when the *Rosengarten*, or the general meeting of the burghers, is assembled.

The sovereign power resides in the Great Council, which, comprising the Senate or Little Council of thirty-six, consists of a hundred and two members, chosen by the Senate, in equal proportion, from the eleven tribes or companies into which the *ancient* burghers are distributed: and in all instances the new member is taken from the company to which the last member belonged.

The prerogatives of the Great Council are, to enact and abrogate laws; to explain any obscure parts of the constitution; and even make alterations in the form of government, should the circumstances require it; to levy taxes; to declare war and conclude peace; to contract alliances; to receive appeals in criminal causes from the burghers of the capital; and in civil processes, above the sum of 100 Swiss livres, or L. 6. 3 s.; to confer the *new* burghership; to elect the treasurer, or the fourth chief of the republic, from the ancient eleven senators; to nominate to the seven exterior bailliages, and to the four Italian governments of Lugano, Locarno, Mendrisio, and Valmaggia, when the turn of appointing to those governments belongs to Soleure; to chuse the deputies for the diet of Frauenfeld, and those for any extraordinary meetings of the Helvetic Confederacy; though in both these cases it is the custom to appoint a senator, and usually either of the four chiefs, the

reigning advoyer excepted, who is not permitted to be absent during the year of his administration.

There are generally a few supernumerary members in the Great Council, which circumstance proceeds from the method of appointing the bailifs. On the nomination of a bailif, his seat in the Great Council being esteemed vacant, is on the next day filled up by a member of the same company in which he is inscribed. At the conclusion of his bailiage he again takes his seat, preserving his ancient rank, though considered as a supernumerary, until one of the six members of his tribe makes a vacancy. The qualifications for a reception into the Great Council are, that the candidate shall be twenty years of age, an *ancient* burgher, and member of the same tribe in which the vacancy happens: and with respect to the last-mentioned qualification, it is necessary that the candidate, if inscribed in a company different from that of his father, must, according to a decree passed in 1764, have been a member of that company during a full year.

The Great Council assembles ordinarily once every month; and extraordinarily, on being convened by the Senate.

The Senate, or Little Council, a constituent part of the Great Council, is composed of the two advoyers or chiefs of the republic, who annually alternate; the chancellor or secretary of state, who has no vote either in the Senate or Great Council; and thirty-three senators drawn from the remaining sixty-six members of the Great Council, in equal proportion from the eleven tribes. The appointment and annual confirmation of the advoyers and banneret by the assembly of burghers,

as well as the confirmation of the senators and members of the Great Council, in their several charges, will be hereafter described, under the article of *Rosengarten*.

The thirty-three senators who, in conjunction with the two advoyers and chancellor, form the Senate, are divided into eleven seniors, and twenty-two juniors. From the eleven seniors the four principal magistrates are always chosen, the two advoyers, the banneret, and treasurer. Upon a vacancy among the eleven, the right of election, though said to reside in the twenty-three juniors, is always exercised according to seniority; the most ancient in rank among the three junior counsellors, who are of the same tribe to which the late member belonged, presents himself of course, and is immediately appointed, or rather confirmed, by the twenty-three juniors. Upon the death or promotion of one among the latter, his place is immediately filled up by the two advoyers and eleven seniors.

The Senate is intrusted with the executive power, and with the care of the police; has supreme and final jurisdiction in all criminal causes, those only excepted in which a burgher of the capital is concerned, who may appeal from their decision to the Great Council; and gives judgment in all civil processes not exceeding the value of a hundred Swiss livres.

The Senate convokes the Great Council; examines and digests all affairs before they are laid before that supreme assembly; fills up the vacant places therein; and in their own body; either directly or indirectly, nominates to almost all the important charges of the republic; appoints to the principal ecclesiastical benefices; receives all

appeals, in the first instance, from the inferior courts of justice; judges all civil causes in the last resort, whose value does not exceed a certain sum; has supreme and final jurisdiction over all criminal affairs, excepting those which concern the burghers of the capital.

The qualifications of a senator are, that he shall be twenty-four years of age, a member of the Great Council, and drawn from the same company to which the last senator belonged. This body assembles three times in the week, and extraordinarily, as often as occasion requires; and it is convoked by the reigning advoyer. The salaries of the senators are as follows;

The reigning advoyer, about	—	L. 363
The advoyer out of office	—	137 10
Senior senator	— — —	46
Chancellor	— — —	208
Attorney General, including his salary of senator	— — —	100
Junior senator	— — —	37 10

Government draws its principal revenues, which do not amount to more than *L. 12,500 per ann.* from the following sources. 1. A tax, called the tax on fortifications; laid on the funds of the tribes and monasteries in the town, and on those of parishes in the bailliages. 2. Tithes, and *rentes foncières* belonging to the state. 3. Tolls. 4. Excise on wine. 5. Interest of money placed out in the canton and in foreign countries. 6. Monopoly of salt. 7. Revenues from the bailliages. 8. Subsidy from France; about *L. 1108*. 9. Sundry small sources, such as demesnes, estates, salaries of vacant benefices, &c.

The principal departments of government are, 1. The tribunals; which comprise the inferior courts of justice, and the Secret Council, consisting of seven members, namely, the two advoyers, the banneret, the treasurer, the first senior senator, the chancellor, and the attorney-general; in case any of these persons should be absent, their places are supplied by the ancient senators, according to seniority. 2. The boards of war. 3. Of those rights, called *droits régaliens*. 4. For finances, agriculture, and public buildings. 5. For the police. 6. For ecclesiastical affairs, charitable institutions, and schools.

The burghers of Soleure are divided into *ancient* and *new*; the former of whom are alone capable of being elected members of the Great Council, or of enjoying any share in the administration of affairs. The origin of this distinction is to be dated from the year 1681, from the following causes. Several foreign families, which settled at Soleure and obtained the right of burghership, being admitted into the Great Council, gave umbrage to those ancient and illustrious families, whose ancestors had, by their valor and prudence, laid the foundation of the republic. In order to prevent the farther participation of honors and emoluments, to which they conceived themselves solely entitled, the Great Council issued an edict, in 1681, that those families only, which at that epoch enjoyed the rights of burghership, should be exclusively qualified to hold any office of government; and that, for the future, no person should be admitted to that right, until the families then existing should be reduced to twenty-five. It was at the same time enacted, that these families and their descendants

should be distinguished by the name of *ancient* burghers, and that those, who from that period should be received into the burghership, should be called *new* burghers. It was also added, that any burgher who should make any proposition contrary to this law, should be banished from the canton, and that his goods should be confiscated.

Beside the exclusive privilege of being entitled to any office of government, the *ancient* burghers enjoy also the right of being solely appointed canons in the chapters of Soleure and Schoenenwerth, and of holding any ecclesiastical benefice in the gift of the Senate. But as there are at present a great deficiency of clergymen among the *ancient* burghers, it will probably soon be thought necessary to dispense with the law on this article, and to permit the *new* burghers, and every subject of the canton, to be candidates for vacant livings.

There are about eighty-five families who possess the right of *ancient* burghership, and of these, about thirty-four of the most illustrious, supply the members of the Great Council, and fill all the various departments of government.

The rights of the *new* burghers consist in nominating and annually confirming the advoyer, the banneret, and *grand sautier*, or lieutenant of the police; but, as they always chuse those persons, who are selected by the Senate, as they exercise this privilege in conjunction with the *ancient* burghers, and as, by the edict of 1681, they must retire from the assembly if there should be any difficulty or opposition; this right of election may be considered as little more than a mere formality. In all other instances, excepting in those concerns which relate to government, the *new* burghers

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enjoy the same privilege as the *ancient* burghers; such as freedom of trade and commerce; of being proprietors of houses and land in the capital and its district. They are also entitled to hold such ecclesiastical benefices as are in the gift of the chapters and of individuals.

The burghers, both *ancient* and *new*, are distributed into eleven tribes or companies, each whereof furnishes three senators and six members of the Great Council. Every person may chuse the company into which he inscribes his name; but having once inscribed himself, he cannot change it. For the purpose of obtaining a place as soon as possible in the government, a young noble selects that company in which there is soon like to be a vacancy; but if he fixes upon one different from that in which his father is incorporated, he must have been received a member during a whole year, before he can be a candidate for admission into the Great Council.

The general assembly of *ancient* and *new* burghers, called *Rosengarten*, which meets on St. John the Baptist's day, for the purpose of electing or confirming the charges of advoyer, banneret, and *grand sautier*, is a ceremony which deserves to be described for its singularity; particularly as it will also convey to you some idea of those annual elections, or rather confirmations, of the principal officers, which take place in most of these aristocratical states.

The assembly is held in the church of the Cordeliers, and is denominated *Rosengarten*, or Garden of Roses; either because a nosegay of flowers, which every burgher carries in his hand, was formerly composed of roses; or, as others

pretend, because this meeting used to be convened in the garden of the Cordeliers, which is said to have been called the Garden of Roses. But, instead of searching into fanciful etymologies, I shall describe what passes at this annual meeting.

About six in the morning, the advoyer out of office, the senators, members of the Great Council, and the *ancient* and *new* burghers, assemble in their respective companies. After the repetition of certain signals, the reigning advoyer, accompanied by the chancellor, the secretary of the finances, and several other officers of state, repair, with drums beating and trumpets sounding, from the town-house to the church of the Cordeliers; where, after presenting his offering upon the altar of the Virgin, he seats himself on a throne, which is placed near the altar. Soon afterwards the senators and remaining members of the Great Council make their appearance at the head of their respective tribes; and having presented their offerings, keep the same rank and stations, which they maintained on entering the church; the advoyer out of office excepted, who places himself near his colleague on the throne. At the conclusion of mass accompanied with music, all but the burghers retire, and the doors of the church are closed. The advoyer, with his sceptre in his hand, pronounces an harangue; then delivering up the sceptre and seals, resigns his dignity, and receives the thanks of the assembly, by the mouth of the attorney-general, for his zeal and attention during the year of his government. Next follow, in the same manner, the resignations of the banneret and of the attorney-general; the former of whom is thanked, in the name of the assembly, by the attorney-

general, and the latter by the advoyer who has just resigned.

This ceremony being finished, the two advoyers, bannerets, attorney-general, and ancient senators, retire from the choir to another part of the church; and the chancellor summoning the junior senators into the choir, reads over the name of each ancient senator, and of the attorney-general, and demands, if the junior senators are pleased to confirm them in their charges for another year. This being obtained, the chancellor and junior senators repair to the assembly in the body of the church, where the chancellor reads over the names of the senior senators and attorney-general confirmed by the juniors, and demands the approbation of the whole assembly of burghers. Upon this, the advoyer who has just resigned, and all the senators, except the advoyer out of office and the banneret, come into the church, and take their respective oaths. The chancellor then acquainting the assembly, that they must proceed to the election of the reigning advoyer; the advoyer, who has just resigned, proposes his colleague: the officer of state, called *Grand Sautier*, cries out, "Let all those who chuse to elect the right noble A. B. the reigning advoyer, hold up their hands under oath;" and immediately informing the advoyer of his election, the latter comes into the church, takes the oath from the chancellor, and receives the oath from the *Grand Sautier*. The election of the banneret is made in the same manner: the same person, who had just resigned his office, being proposed to the assembly by the reigning advoyer, and accepted, gives his hand to the reigning advoyer, as he never takes the oath but in time of war.

The *grand sautier* then retiring, is proposed and recommended by the reigning advoyer, and re-entering the church, he also takes the oath to government.

At the end of these elections, several decrees of the Great Council are read, and particularly that which relates to the right of *ancient* burghership, and the election of the advoyer, banneret and *grand sautier*; by which it is enacted, that in case any opposition should be made to the regular order of appointment, the *new* burghers shall retire from the assembly, and the election be vested solely in the *ancient* burghers.

The same magistrates are always re-elected or confirmed in their several places: the advoyer out of office is nominated reigning advoyer; on the death of either of the advoyers, the banneret is of course appointed to the vacant office, and is succeeded by the treasurer, only undergoing the formality of a nomination.

At the conclusion of this ceremony, the reigning advoyer, at the head of the Senate, passes through two lines of troops under arms to the town-house, where the first magistrate and the ancient senators confirm the junior senators; after which he returns to his own house, accompanied by the Senate and members of the Great Council, and is complimented, first by the banneret, and afterwards by the chancellor.

From the consideration of this detail we may conclude, that those authors have erred who call the government of Soleure aristo-democratical, for it is certainly a most complete aristocracy: in-as-much as the supreme government resides in the Great Council, the members whereof are

exclusively taken from the *ancient* burghers; as there are only eighty-one families which enjoy that right, and no more can be added until they are reduced to twenty-five; as of these scarcely more than thirty enjoy any share in the government; and lastly, as the election and annual confirmation of the principal magistrates is confined to the *ancient* burghers, if there should be any opposition in the general assembly called Rosengarten. The government, however, under whatsoever title it may be classed, is mild and equitable; and the people are tranquil and contented.

L E T T E R 21.

Treaties with France — Reflections on Foreign Service.

THE French ambassador to the Helvetic body resides in Soleure, and distributes those annual pensions which the king his master has stipulated by treaty to pay to the Catholic cantons. Louis the Eleventh was the first French monarch who employed Swiss troops; and granted subsidies to the states, which have since been considerably augmented by his successors. The perpetual alliance which Francis the First concluded with the Swiss cantons, soon after the battle of Marignano, is considered as the basis of every subsequent treaty between the two contracting powers. Several of that king's successors derived considerable advantages from the Swiss infantry in their service: they aided Henry the Fourth in establishing himself

upon the throne of his ancestors; and assisted both Louis the Thirteenth and his son, in the several wars in which they were engaged. No troops indeed have ever been more justly distinguished for their fidelity, valor, and excellent discipline.

The general alliance between France and the whole Helvetic union, ratified by Louis the Fourteenth in 1663, was to remain in force during the joint lives of that monarch, and his son the dauphin, and for eight years after the death of either. Towards the end of his reign, when Louis, on account of his son's death, proposed to renew the treaty in his and his successor's name, the Protestant cantons refused their consent: and it was concluded only with the Catholic cantons, and the republic of the Vallais.

This alliance differed from the former treaties in the following very essential articles: It stipulated that, if the kingdom of France should be invaded, the contracting republics should permit an additional levy to be raised at his majesty's expense, not exceeding sixteen thousand men; that if the Helvetic body, or any particular canton, should be attacked by a foreign power, the king engaged to assist them with as many forces as should be judged necessary; and finally, that if any dissensions should arise between the contracting cantons, his majesty should, at the request of the aggrieved party, try all gentle methods of effecting a reconciliation; but if these should fail, the king agreed, both in his own name, and in that of his successor, to compel the aggressor to abide by the treaties concluded between the cantons and their allies. This last article, as it seemed, in some measure, to authorize the interference of the king of France with
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the politics of Switzerland, appeared dangerous to many of the Swifs, and inconsistent with that absolute independence, which they had hitherto prized above all other advantages.

France having long in vain attempted to persuade the Protestant cantons to accede to the alliance, that a general treaty with the whole Helvetic body might be renewed, at length, after much opposition and repeated negotiations, succeeded in effecting the measure. This important league was concluded at Soleure in May 1777, between the king of France on one side, and the thirteen cantons and their allies on the other, to continue in force during fifty years. By this treaty it is agreed, that if the kingdom of France should be invaded, the cantons and their allies shall furnish an additional levy of six thousand men; and if the cantons, or any of their allies, should be attacked, the king, if required, engages to furnish them, at his own expence, with such succours as may be deemed necessary.

That article of the treaty with the Catholic cantons in 1715, which related to the mediation of the king, if any disputes should arise between the thirteen cantons, is very properly and wisely omitted.

Before this alliance, none of the Protestant states received any pensions from France: but by the sixteenth article, the Protestants of Glaris and Appenzel, and the town of Bienne, have agreed to accept *les argents de paix et d'alliance*, as these subsidies are here called. The acceptance of pensions derogates greatly from that spirit of absolute independence, which all the Protestant cantons and states of Switzerland have hitherto affected to

profess; and it would have reflected much greater honor on the Swiss nation, if the whole body had imitated Zurich, Berne, Basle, and Schaffhausen; in forming the league upon terms of perfect equality, and rejecting the proffered pensions, which give an air of venality to their treaties with France.

It has long been a controverted question, whether Switzerland gains or loses by furnishing, according to the tenor of her alliance with France, Sardinia, Naples, and Holland, such numbers of her natives to serve in foreign armies. That the fidelity of these troops is so well recognised, as to be chosen to be the life-guards of several sovereigns, is a circumstance which undoubtedly redounds much to the honor of the national character: but, on the other hand, to traffic with the blood of subjects, and, for paltry subsidies, to fight the battle of any king, in any cause, seems to betray a mercenary spirit, uncontrouled by considerations of justice and humanity. It has been urged, that if Switzerland did not furnish these supplies to foreign nations, she would be over-stocked with inhabitants; and that the natives would be obliged, like the northern hives of old, to emigrate for subsistence: for in many parts there is no commerce, and the mountainous tracts cannot supply sufficient provision for such a numerous people. In reply to this reasoning, it may be alledged, that the Swiss do not use all the resources in their power: commerce might be more generally cultivated and encouraged; as there is no part of Switzerland far removed from the principal rivers and great lakes, most of which have a direct communication with the sea.

But, to be convinced that they have not exhausted all the advantages to which they might resort, let them look back on ancient Greece, and the immense populousness in so confined a country; or, what is more open to their observation, let them consider the present state of the United Provinces, and the abundance which those industrious people enjoy on a tract of land snatched from an element perpetually reclaiming its prior occupancy. But the Swiss need not be reminded of ancient or foreign examples: Geneva and St. Gallen are, for their extent, exceedingly populous; and yet the natural productions of their lands are by no means sufficient to support all the inhabitants. Appenzel and Vallengin are entirely mountainous; nevertheless both those districts are remarkably well peopled and derive, by means of commerce and industry, all the necessaries of life in great plenty. Indeed Switzerland is so far from being over-stocked with people, that in most of the great towns there is a manifest deficiency of inhabitants; and in several parts of their country, hands are frequently wanting for the common purposes of agriculture.

These reflections seem to prove the mistaken policy of Switzerland, in letting out her troops to foreign states. On the contrary, many circumstances may be alledged in its favor. This practice has tended to keep up the military spirit of the Swiss, even during a state of profound peace, which has now continued, with few interruptions, for three hundred years. The several cantons not only have in constant reserve, and without the least expense, a body of well-disciplined forces, which they can recal at a moment's warning; but it becomes the

interest, for that reason, of those foreign powers, whom they furnish with men, not to foment any division among them, which might render the presence of their troops necessary at home. Add to this, that the privileges which the Swiss enjoy in France, and the very advantageous articles, relating to commerce, secured to them in all their treaties, seem to strengthen the argument for continuing their connexions of this kind with that kingdom.

This argument, however, would be more conclusive, if those privileges were still preserved in the same latitude as was granted by the ninth article of the Perpetual Peace concluded with Francis I. in 1516, and confirmed by several successive treaties. But the case is far otherwise. These immunities have been gradually and almost imperceptibly violated: the Swiss merchants were subjected to the poll-tax; and fresh duties, contrary to the tenor of their rights, were imposed on their merchandise. During the administration of the Duke d'Aiguillon, the Swiss complaining of these infractions; a negotiation was begun at Soleure with the French ambassador, which produced, however, no other effect than a short letter from the minister, declining, in the most positive manner, to redress the grievances, though founded on the faith of treaties.

On the late renovation of the Perpetual Peace, in 1777, it was expected that this matter of dispute would be amicably adjusted; and the Count de Vergennes insinuated, that such was the intention of the court of Versailles. Many cantons, and particularly Zurich, were principally induced by these motives and these expectations to accede to

the alliance; but not wholly trusting, however, to the promises of the French cabinet, it was insisted that an article explaining and confirming the said privileges should be inserted in the new treaty. The minister, with his usual address, eluded a direct mention of the demanded rights; but, in order not to lose the confidence of a nation, at a time when he most wished to obtain it, the king engaged, by the 18th article, to *preserve to the Swiss those privileges and advantages to which they had a legitimate right, and which they had hitherto enjoyed in France.* And the Swiss agreed to postpone *the precise determination of the nature and extent of the said privileges to future conferences, wherein those matters should be regulated with fidelity and equity.*

It must appear astonishing that the Swiss should be contented with so ambiguous a declaration; or could be led to believe, that the French court would preserve to them their legitimate immunities, in the moment when that legitimacy was a subject of contention. The Helvetic body had soon occasion to repent of their credulity. For, in 1781, the king of France issued an edict irrevocably subjecting the Swiss, who possess lands in France, to the poll-tax, and to all the national imposts; and laid the same duties on their merchandise imported into France, as are paid by the merchants of other countries, cheese and linens excepted, which were taxed at a reduced value.

But a still severer blow was levelled against the Swiss in 1786; when, notwithstanding the express reservation granted in the Perpetual Peace, the importation of linens was prohibited in France. The prohibition of this branch of commerce,

which furnished employment to so many hands in various parts of Switzerland, particularly in the cantons of Zurich, Glaris, and Appenzel, and was almost the sole resource of the natives, spread a sensible alarm among the natives; but was not productive of any serious consequences. After the first surprise and agitation were past, the industry of the Swiss was not abated; and the linens found their way into France, either by contraband trade, or by contract with the French East India Company.

LETTER 22.

The Canton of Zug.

Zug, August 5.

WE yesterday quitted Zurich^s, and walked to Albis, a small village about three leagues distant, situated near the summit of a mountain, much visited by travellers, who are attracted by the variety and extent of the prospect.

^s I have in this part arranged the preceding letters differently from the former editions, and according to the journal of my tour in 1785; though I did not at that time proceed from Soleure to Zurich, yet I have thought proper to resume the order of my first journey in 1776, and to bring the reader back to Zurich, from whence I take my departure, as before, to Zug. The traveller who enters Switzerland at Schaffhausen, and quits it at Geneva or Neufchatel, will perhaps find this itinerary from Zurich to Basle, Bienne, Soleure, and thence to Berne and Lucerne, more convenient than that from Zurich immediately to Zug and Lucerne; while those who quit Switzerland at Basle will prefer the latter.

We fortunately escaped a violent shower of rain, accompanied with a storm of thunder and lightning, which had threatened for some time, and began immediately upon our arrival: but we were well housed; and our host gave us a good supper and an excellent bottle of Muscat wine. We were abroad this morning by five, and had a very agreeable walk to this place; the weather, which had of late been very sultry, being cooled by the lightning and rain. We passed over the field of battle at Cappel, where Zuingle was slain; regretting this instance of disunion between the Swiss republics, and lamenting the premature death of that great reformer, who was killed in the 48th year of his age. We pursued our journey through a pleasant country, so thickly planted with fruit-trees, that I could hardly distinguish any other sort. Indeed, we had before remarked the prodigious number of those trees in several other parts of Switzerland; the country being in many places almost a continued orchard.

Zug, the capital of this canton, stands delightfully upon the edge of a beautiful lake, in a fertile valley, abounding with corn, pasture, and wood. This canton formerly belonged to the House of Austria; and continued faithful to that family, when the other neighbouring states had formed themselves into independent republics. As it lies between Zurich and Schweitz, the communication between those two cantons was maintained with difficulty; and by this means frequent opportunities were afforded to the House of Austria of invading and harassing the Swiss. Under these circumstances, the six allied cantons, in 1351, laid siege to Zug, which was resolutely defended

by the inhabitants ; but as Albert duke of Austria was in no condition to assist them, the town at length surrendered upon the most honorable conditions. The generosity of the conquerors was equal to the courage and magnanimity of the vanquished: for, in consequence of this submission, the canton of Zug was delivered from the yoke of a foreign master; obtained the most assured liberty and independence; and was admitted into the Helvetic Confederacy upon equal terms.

The government of this little canton is exceedingly complicated; and the inhabitants of the town have somewhat more influence, and enjoy a greater share in the administration of affairs, than those of the capital burghs in the five other democratical cantons. The supreme power resides in the inhabitants of the four districts of Zug, Bar, Egeri, and Meutzingen; who assemble yearly to enact laws, and to chuse their magistrates. The Landamman, reciprocally elected from each of the four communities above-mentioned, is nominated by the suffrages of the whole collective districts: he continues three years in office, when taken from Zug, and but two years when chosen from each of the three other districts. The general administration of affairs is intrusted to the council of regency, composed of forty members: of whom thirteen are supplied by the district of Zug, and twenty-seven are selected equally from the three remaining communities. This council, as well as the Landamman, resides always in the capital.

Oswald, one of our old British kings, is the titular Saint of this place; and in the church is his statue, with the following inscription:

Sanctus Oswaldus Rex Angliæ Patronus hujus Ecclesiæ.

This Oswald⁶ was a king of Northumberland in the seventh century; and is much renowned among the monkish writers for his chastity, piety, and power of working miracles. I have been endeavouring to discover the connexion between a British king, under the heptarchy, and a small canton of Switzerland; without reflecting, how fruitless is the attempt to give any reason for long-established customs. In the church of Rome, saints are easily transplanted into any soil; and caprice, as well as superstition, may have inclined the inhabitants of Zug to adore a saint, whose name is barely known in his own country.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R 23.

The Town and Canton of Lucerne — General Pfiffer's Model.

WE took boat at Zug, and being rowed across the lake (which is about three leagues long, and one broad) were landed at a village in the canton of Schwytz. From thence we walked to Küssnacht; and in our way passed by a small chapel sacred to William Tell, erected on the spot where, it is said, he shot the Austrian governor. At Küssnacht, we embarked upon the lake of Lucerne; and were much struck upon our approach with the fine situation of that town, and the noble amphitheatre of mountains, which border the lake.

⁶ See an account of this Oswald, who was defeated and slain in 624, by Peuda, king of the Mercians, in Pennant's Tour to Wales, vol. i. p. 258.

Lucerne, originally subject to the House of Austria⁷, was exposed to the inroads of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, when those cantons had secured their own liberty and independence. Her commerce to Italy was interrupted; her fairs unfrequented; and her citizens compelled to be continually under arms, in order to protect their territory from incessant depredations. Under these circumstances, the House of Austria imprudently loading the citizens with additional taxes, as exorbitant as they were unjust, Lucerne made her peace with the confederate cantons: and, having soon after expelled the Austrian party; entered into a perpetual alliance with Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, and became a member of the Helvetic union⁸.

The accession of Lucerne gave additional credit and power to the confederacy; and enabled it, in 1386, to resist all the efforts of a great and implacable enemy. In that year, Leopold duke of Austria invaded the canton with a numerous army; when the combined troops gained a bloody victory at Sempach, in which Leopold lost his life. In the accounts of this battle, an instance of private valor is recorded, which would have done honor even to a Grecian or a Roman name; and only requires the pen of a Thucydides or a Livy to equal in fame the exploits of the most admired heroes of antiquity. The Austrian army, far

⁷ The town of *Lucerne* was built in the seventeenth century, and belonged at first to its chapter, now the abbey of *St. Leger*. In the reign of king *Pepin* it came into the possession of the abbey of *Murbach* in *Alsace*, and was in 1298 purchased by the house of *Austria*. RAMOND.

⁸ In 1352. RAMOND.

superior in number, was drawn up in firm battalion, accoutred in heavy armour, and furnished with long pikes, which they presented before them. The Swiss troops were led to the attack in the form of a wedge, in order to open their way into the ranks of the enemy, and to break the solidity of the battalion. The Austrians, nevertheless, continuing for some time impenetrable; Arnold de Winkelried rushed alone upon the enemy to certain death; and, seizing as many pikes as he could grasp, endeavoured to force through the ranks: but he was killed in the attempt. His patriotic valor, however, was not exerted in vain: it inflamed the Swiss with new courage, and taught the best method of penetrating into the battalion; which they at length effected, after the most desperate efforts of invincible resolution.

Leopold himself might have escaped, when his troops first began to give way; but, with a magnanimity worthy of a better fate, he determined, after having been a witness to the total rout of his army, not to survive so ignominious a day: accordingly he rushed into the thickest of the enemy, and was slain. In the arsenal of this place are still preserved his armour, together with a large quantity of cords; with which, according to tradition, he intended to have bound the citizens of Lucerne. The keeper of the arsenal displayed them to us with some kind of triumph, as the man, who shows the Tower of London, points out the chains that were taken on board of the Spanish armada; which Philip the Second is said to have destined for the principal nobility of England.

The government of Lucerne is entirely aristocratical, or rather oligarchical. The sovereign power resides in the Council of one hundred, comprising the Senate or Little Council. The former is the nominal sovereign; but the whole power actually resides in the latter, consisting of thirty-six members, who are formed into two divisions, which exercise the office by rotation. The members of this Senate are neither confirmed by the Sovereign Council, nor by the citizens, but are only dependant upon themselves; the division which retires at the end of six months, confirming that which comes into office. Besides, the vacant places in the Senate are filled by its own body; so that the power remains in the possession of a few patrician families, and, as the son generally succeeds his father, or the brother his brother, the senatorial dignity may be considered, in some measure, as hereditary.

The administration of the current affairs, the care of the police, the management of the finances, and the whole executive power, resides in the Senate, which sits constantly; whereas the Sovereign Council is assembled only upon particular and important occasions. The Senate has cognizance of criminal causes; but in case of capital condemnation, the Sovereign Council is convoked in order to pronounce the sentence: a practice worthy of imitation! for the condemnation of a criminal cannot be too maturely weighed; and great solemnity used in pronouncing the sentence, must impress a strong effect upon the minds of the people. In civil causes, an appeal lies from the Senate to the Sovereign Council; but this must be a mere formality: as, in fact, it is an appeal from the

senators in one court to the same senators in another. Indeed, their influence over the Sovereign Council must necessarily be absolute: for, they themselves constitute above a third of that body: chuse their own members; and confer the principal charges of government. They nominate also to the ecclesiastical benefices, which are very considerable; near two thirds of the revenues of the canton belonging to the clergy.

The chiefs of the republic are two advoyers, who are chosen from the Senate by the Sovereign Council, and are confirmed annually. In all elections, the relations of the candidates, to the third degree, are excluded from voting; and neither the father and the son, nor two brothers, can be members of the Senate at the same time. Excellent institutions, one should think, to prevent the too great influence of family-connexions! excellent indeed in theory, but useless in practice: and this circumstance proves, that when the spirit of the constitution is purely oligarchical, any laws enacted for the purpose of counteracting the power of the nobles, are mere ciphers. In some few instances, however, the authority of the nobles is controuled: for, in declaring war and peace, forming new alliances, or imposing new taxes, the citizens must be assembled, and give their consent.

Lucerne being the first in rank and power among the Catholic cantons, is the residence of the Pope's nuncio: and all affairs relative to religion are treated in the annual diet which assembles in this town, composed of the deputies of those cantons. The town contains scarcely three thousand inhabitants; has no manufactures of any consequence, and little commerce; and as

to learning, it no where meets with less encouragement, and consequently is no where less cultivated. What a contrast to Zurich! Yet, under these disadvantages, a few persons have made no inconsiderable progress in literature. Among these the most conspicuous is Mr. Balthasar, member of the Senate: he possesses a library that is rich in books relative to the history of Switzerland, in which he is extremely conversant; and the publications which he has already given to the world, and those which he is now preparing for the press, prove that he knows how to use them. His works are, for the most part, in the German and Latin tongues; they contain biographical anecdotes of several illustrious Swiss; elucidate various important parts in the general history of Switzerland; but more particularly relate to the canton of Lucerne. His son, a member of the Great Council, deserves to be mentioned for his collection of English books; and the zeal with which he endeavours to propagate a knowledge of our literature. I have also no less satisfaction in adding, that, since my first expedition into these parts, science is more cultivated; that the principles of toleration are better understood and more widely diffused; and that a literary society is established for the promotion of polite learning. The population of the canton has considerably increased within this century: a sure proof of a mild and equitable government. The inhabitants are, as I am informed, almost totally engaged in agriculture. The southern parts of the canton are chiefly mountainous, and furnish for exportation cattle, hides, cheese, and butter. The northern district is fruitful in corn; the crops of which being more than sufficient for the

consumption of the whole canton, there is a constant exportation of this article from the weekly market held in the town, to which the inhabitants of the neighbouring democratical cantons resort, in order to purchase that and other necessaries in which their own country is deficient⁹. The overplus for the supply of this market is drawn from Suabia and Alface¹. This commerce, which, together with the passage of the merchandise for Italy, is the chief support of the town, might be exceedingly improved and augmented, considering its advantageous situation: for the Reufs issues from the lake, passes through the town; and, having joined the Aar, falls into the Rhine.

The cathedral and the Jesuits church, are the only public buildings worthy of observation; but they are too much loaded with rich ornaments, and disgraced by bad paintings. In the cathedral is an organ of a fine tone, and of an extraordinary size: of the latter you may judge by the dimensions of the centre pipe; which, as the priest assured me, is forty feet in length, near three in breadth, and weighs eleven hundred pounds. The bridges which skirt the town, round the edge of the lake, are the fashionable walks of the place, and remarkable for their length. Being covered at top, and open at the sides, they afford a constant view of this delightful and romantic country. They are decorated with coarse paintings, representing the

⁹ The canton of *Lucerne* engaged to supply those of *Schweitz*, *Uri* and *Underwalden* with grain, a bargain which has proved very disadvantageous. RAMOND.

¹ According to the books of entry, there were in the year 1776 imported wines from Alface for more than one million of livres. RAMOND.

histories of the Old Testament, the battles of the Swifs, and the dance of Death².

Upon our arrival at Lucerne, we sent a letter of recommendation to General Pfiffer, a native of this town, and an officer in the French service. He received us immediately, with his usual civility, and showed us his topographical representation of the most mountainous part of Switzerland, which well deserves the accurate attention of the curious traveller. It is a model in relief; and what was finished in 1775, comprised about sixty square leagues, in the cantons of Lucerne, Zug, Berne, Uri, Schweitz, and Underwalden³. The model was twelve feet long, and nine and a half broad.

The composition is principally a mastic of charcoal, lime, clay, a little pitch, with a thin coat of wax; and is so hard as to be trod upon without receiving the least damage⁴. The whole is painted with different colors, representing the objects as they exist in nature. It is worthy of particular observation, that not only the woods of oak, beech, pine and other trees, are distinguished; but also that the strata of the several rocks

² These three bridges are built in a row, and seem to make but one. The first is above five hundred paces long. The dance of death which decorates the third is the most remarkable of these paintings; it is full of spirit and imagination, and such of its pictures as have not been retouched by the correcting pencil of modern dawbers are pretty good. The dances of death, so common in Switzerland, owe their origin to those epidemical diseases which under the name of the plague infested at different times this country and carried off its inhabitants. RAMOND.

³ The lake of *Lucerne* forms the centre of the plan. R.

⁴ It is, as Mr. *Pfiffer* assured me, made of paste-board covered with a mixture of pitch and wax. RAMOND.

rocks are marked ; each being shaped upon the spot, and formed with granite, gravel, calcareous stone, or such other natural substances as compose the original mountains. The plan is indeed so minutely exact, that it comprises not only all the mountains, lakes, rivers, towns, villages, and forests; but every cottage, every torrent, every bridge, every road, and even every path is distinctly and accurately represented⁵.

General Pfiffer has already been employed in this work about ten years, with the most astonishing patience and assiduity: he has himself raised the plans upon the spots, taken the elevations of the mountains, and laid them down in their several proportions. In the prosecution of this laborious performance, he has been twice arrested for a spy; and in the popular cantons has frequently been forced to work by moonlight, in order to avoid the jealousy of the peasants, who think their liberty would be endangered, should so exact a plan be taken of their country. As he is obliged to remain some time upon the tops of the Alps, where no provision can be procured; he generally carries with him a few she-goats, whose milk supplies him with nourishment. Indeed his perseverance in surmounting all the difficulties, that necessarily have arisen in the course of this undertaking, is almost inconceivable. When he has finished any particular part, he sends for the

⁵ Mr. Pfiffer showed me on his model a great part of the road into the *Ober-Hafl*i through the *Unterwald*, the abbey of *Engelberg* and over the mountain of *Engstelberg*, a journey of eighteen leagues, of which I shall speak below. By the view of this plan I was enabled to find out my way without a guide. RAMOND.

peasants and *chasseurs* who reside near the spot, and bids them examine accurately each mountain; whether it corresponds, as far as the smallness of the scale will admit, with its natural appearance: then, by frequently retouching, he corrects the deficiencies. He takes his elevations from the level of the lake of Lucerne; which, according to Mr. de Sauffure⁶, is about fourteen hundred and eight feet above the Mediterranean.

This model, exhibiting the most mountainous parts of Switzerland, conveys a sublime picture of immense alps piled one upon another: as if the story of the Titans were realized, and they had succeeded (at least in one spot of the globe) in heaping Offa upon Pelion, and Olympus upon Offa. The general informed me, that the tops of the alps which crossed Switzerland in the same line, are nearly of the same level; or in other words, that there are continued chains of mountains of the same elevation, rising in progression to the highest range; and from thence gradually descending in the same proportion towards Italy.

He is exceedingly polite and affable to strangers, and ever ready to be of any service to travellers, in pointing out the best roads, and in acquainting them with the places most worthy of observation.

Near Lucerne is Mount Pilate, formerly called Mons *Pileatus*, from the Latin word *pilea*; its top being generally covered with a cloud or cap. This word has been corrupted into *Pilatus*; and from this alteration a thousand ridiculous stories have been invented; among others, that Pontius Pilate, after having condemned our Saviour to

⁶ Professor of philosophy and natural history at Geneva. R.

death, was seized with remorse; made an excursion into Switzerland; and drowned himself in a lake, which is at the top of that mountain⁷. This corruption of a word, and the absurd legend fabricated from its alteration, will naturally remind you of several fables of similar absurdity, which are seriously related by the Greek writers: a circumstance which my very worthy and learned friend Mr. Bryant, has so amply and ably discussed, in his *Analysis of ancient Mythology*.

I am, &c.

P O S T S C R I P T.

HAVING, in three successive visits to Lucerne, observed the gradual progress of General Pfiffer's model, and in August 1786 seen it finally completed, I am enabled to add the following particulars, partly from my own observation, and partly communicated by the ingenious artist himself.

The model is composed of a hundred and forty-two compartments of different sizes and forms: they are respectively numbered; and the whole can be taken to pieces and united with almost as much ease (if we may compare great things with small) as the dissected maps, by which children are instructed in geography.

The lake of Lucerne, nearly the centre of Switzerland, forms also the centre of the plan, which lays down part of the circumjacent cantons

⁷ The common people pretend that he pulls those that bathe in it by the legs. This popular tale owes its origin to the extreme lightness of the waters of the mountains, which deceives the unwary swimmer who cannot sustain himself in them. RAMOND.

of Zurich, Zug, Schweitz, Underwalden, Lucerne, and Berne, and a small portion of the mountains of Glaris. It comprehends a space of $18\frac{1}{2}$ leagues⁸ in length, and 11 in breadth; and the dimensions of the model being 20 feet⁹ and a half in length, and 12 in breadth; $203\frac{1}{2}$ square leagues are represented on a parallelogram of 246 feet; or about two English miles and $\frac{1}{4}$ by a square English foot.

The highest point of the model from the level of the centre, is about ten inches; and as the most elevated mountain represented therein rises 1475 toises, or 9440 feet, above the lake of Lucerne, at a gross calculation, the height of an inch in the model is equivalent to about 900 feet. And it is a matter of astonishment to observe the stupendous works of nature delineated with such perfect resemblance in so small a compass.

As to myself, though I received considerable satisfaction from the first view of this extraordinary performance, yet I again contemplated it with much more pleasure, and still greater astonishment, when I was able to trace on it many of my various expeditions, and to recognize its surprising accuracy.

The general began this elaborate work at the age of fifty, and though now in the seventieth year of his age, continues his annual expeditions into the alps, with a spirit and ardor that would fatigue a much younger person. It is likewise no less entertaining than instructive, to hear him expatiate, with an agreeable vivacity, on the most

⁸ A league is equal to 2,288 toises, or 13,728 French feet, or 14,643 English feet.

⁹ French feet.

interesting objects, which are observed on the model. He kindly supplied me with the following remarks, which I transcribe from my journal.

According to a rough calculation, the height on which snow usually remains during summer, may be estimated at 1360 toises, or 8704 English feet, above the level of the sea; and on which it never melts, at 1448, or 9264 feet.

As a curious instance of divided property, he pointed out the promontory called Kieman, on the western shore of the lake of Zug, of which the ground belongs to Lucerne, the timber to Zug, and the leaves to Schweitz. As a proof of astonishing confidence, he showed me, on each side of the road that runs through the valley of Muotta, in the canton of Schweitz, several ranges of small shops uninhabited, yet filled with various goods, of which the prices are marked: any passengers, who wish to become purchasers, enter the shops, take away the merchandise, and deposit the price, which the owners call for in the evening.

Among the phenomena of nature he mentioned the Rigi, an insulated mountain near the lake of Lucerne, twenty-five miles in circumference, and rising to a perpendicular height of more than four thousand feet above the surface of the lake: it is entirely composed of gravel and pudding-stone, and must have been formed by the waters. The Rigi joins to a small ridge of sand-stone running towards Schweitz.

Mount Pilate offers a most singular curiosity. At the elevation of five thousand feet, and in the most perpendicular part of the mountain, near the pasture of Brunlen, is observed, in the

middle of a cavern hollowed in a black rock, a colossal statue, which appears to be of white stone. It is the figure of a man in drapery standing, leaning one elbow on a pedestal, with one leg crossed over the other, and so regularly formed, that it cannot be a *lusus naturæ*. This statue is called Dominic by the peasants, who frequently accost it from the only place in which it can be seen, and when their voices are re-echoed from the cavern, they say, in the simplicity of their hearts, "Dominic has answered us."

It is difficult to imagine by whom, or in what manner this statue could be placed in a situation, which has hitherto proved inaccessible to all who have endeavoured to approach it. About the beginning of the present century, one Huber, a native of Krientz, a neighbouring village, attempted to descend into the cavern by means of ropes let down from the summit of the rock: he succeeded so far as to gain a near view of this singular phenomenon, and was again drawn up in safety. On a second trial, as he was suspended in the air, and was endeavouring to draw himself into the cavern by fixing a grapple to the statue, the cord broke, and he was dashed to pieces. Since that dreadful accident no one has ventured to repeat the experiment from the same quarter. Another trial to penetrate to the statue was made in 1756, by General Pfiffer and eight persons, from a small opening on the opposite side of the mountain, in which the natives collect a white substance called *mond-loch*, or cream of the moon. As this opening is supposed to communicate with the cavern, the general and his companions crept on their hands and knees, one behind the

other, and winding in the bed of a small torrent, through several narrow passages, they at length discovered the light of the sun through a remote chasm; but as the distance seemed very considerable, and as the fall of a single stone might have obstructed their return, they thought it imprudent to venture any further, and retreated without having effected their purpose.

L E T T E R 24.

Valley of Entlibuch — Zoffingen — Lake of Sempach — Anniversary of the Battle.

IN my first expedition to this country, I had no opportunity of visiting the interior parts of the canton of Lucerne, which I afterwards traversed in 1785 and 1786.

On both those occasions I passed from Berne to Lucerne, one time along the high road leading through Zoffingen, Sursee, and by the lake of Sempach; at the other, through Langenau, the Emmen-thal, and the valley of Entlibuch, a district which, though not usually frequented by travellers, yet highly deserves their attention.

In the 13th century, Entlibuch was subject to the counts of Wolhausen, and came by purchase, in 1299, to the emperor Albert. In the following century it was held as a fief from the House of Austria by several successive counts; of these the last, Peter of Torrenberg, having grievously oppressed the natives, they revolted, and in 1386 threw themselves under the protection of Lucerne.

That republic continued to possess Entlibuch, as a feudal tenure under the House of Austria, until 1405; when the archduke Frederic renounced all the rights of sovereignty in favor of Lucerne.

For above a century and a half subsequent to that period, the inhabitants, inflamed with a spirit of independence, and excited by the example of the neighbouring popular cantons, frequently rose in arms, and attempted to establish a democracy; but without success. Their last insurrection broke out in 1653; since which time they have continued in a state of perfect tranquillity, under the wise administration of Lucerne; and have enjoyed, with contentment, the considerable privileges with which they are endowed.

The bailliage of Entlibuch extends from the Emmen-thal in the canton of Berne, to the bridge near Wertenstein, about fifteen miles in length, and nine in its greatest breadth; and contains at least 11,000 souls. It is governed by a bailif, who is always a senator of Lucerne: he continues in office two years, and generally resides in that capital. The inhabitants enjoy considerable immunities, which they know how to prize.

The bailliage is divided into three districts; the Upper, or Eschlismat; the Middle, or Shupfen; the Lower, or Entlibuch; each whereof has its separate courts of justice, from which an appeal lies to Lucerne.

That part of the bailliage which I traversed, is a valley, watered by several lively rivulets, winding for some way between two ridges of well-wooded hills, and abounding in picturesque scenery. Afterwards the country was undulating, and the road, which was narrow and rugged, ran along continual

acclivities and declivities, through well-cultivated fields of pasture. I passed through several villages, of which the principal were Eschlismat, Shupfen, and Entlibuch, which takes its name from the rivulet Entle, and gives it to the whole district. These places are small; but the whole country is firewed with cottages, and seems a continued village. The inhabitants chiefly follow agriculture; they rear large quantities of horned cattle, sheep, goats, and swine; make and export cheeses in great abundance. Though usually richer than the inhabitants in the other parts of the canton, yet they did not appear so well clothed, or to possess such neat cottages, as their neighbours in the Emme-thal. The peasants of Entlibuch are much esteemed for their independent spirit, vigor, and firength; remarkable for keenness and vivacity, for great quickness in repartee, for a peculiarity of garb, and for many striking customs which distinguish them from the natives of the circum-jacent districts. Of various usages, which escaped my notice during my short stay among them, I chanced to gain information of one custom, which reminds me of the *Fescennina Licentia* mentioned by Horace, that prevailed among the Roman peasants. Two neighbouring parishes send a challenge to each other; and, at the conclusion of the carnival, each dispatches a man, *bedizened* with flowers and shells, called *shrove-monday-ambassador*; who rides to the neighbouring village, and reads, or rather sings, two satirical compositions in verse: the one, a general satire against the parish, usually begins by celebrating a period of Swiss history accommodated to the circumstances of time and place; then draws a comparison between the two

parishes, giving the preference to his own, either for the superior learning and piety of the priest, the wisdom and impartiality of the president, the industry and spirit of the men, the beauty and chastity of the women, and the education of the children. The second composition consists of a string of epigrams in ridicule of particular persons; in which any scandalous adventures, or ludicrous circumstances, which have happened since the last year, are recorded with much exaggeration. The poet finishes his harangue with expressing a wish, that on the next Shrove-monday the inhabitants may improve, and not deserve such a severe reprimand.

On the conclusion of this lecture, which creates much laughter, the *mock ambassador* returns ; and the men of the two parishes repair, with drums beating and colors flying, to an open place, called the *Field of Battle*, followed and encouraged by the inhabitants of their respective parishes. When the two *armies* are drawn up in order of battle ; the *combatants*, in imitation of the old Swiss custom, fall down upon their knees, offer up a short prayer, and start up at the sound of the trumpet.

Having formed themselves into two columns of several ranks, they march arm in arm, with uniform step and military attitude; both the foremost lines meet in front and jostle against each other, being supported and pushed forwards by the hinder files, frequently assisted by the women, until one *phalanx* is broke. The victorious party is dignified with the name of the *Swiss*, and those who gave way are called *Austrians*, in allusion to the ancient animosity between those two powers. The jurymen of the district are present as umpires,

VVVJ

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and to prevent any violent disputes and quarrels. After the rencounter both parties sit down to table, and the day is concluded with feasting.

As those satirical compositions occasionally created much ill-will between the two neighbouring parishes, and the rencounters were attended with various accidents, the government of Lucerne abolished the custom; but has lately permitted it to be revived, with certain restrictions calculated to prevent any future mischief.

The valley of Entlibuch may be considered as one of those parts which unite the mild and cultivated, with the more wild and rugged scenery of Switzerland; its acclivities gradually ascend and terminate in Mount Pilate, whose barren top is seen towering above the fertile and well wooded hills.

On quitting this valley we crossed the Emmen over a covered bridge, admired the romantic position of Wertenstein, a convent of Cordeliers, overhanging the perpendicular banks of that torrent; and passed through a very steep and rocky country to Malters, a small village within a league of the capital. Here being a considerable fair, I stopped and dined at the *table d'hôte*, in company with several gentlemen from Lucerne. In walking through the fair, I observed several booths for the sale of artificial flowers: which were purchased by the country girls. With these flowers, and with four bows of ribbands, they ornament their hats, which they adjust obliquely, with a degree of rustic coquetry that is not unbecoming.

Another district of this canton, is that part which I visited in 1786, along the high road leading from Berne to Lucerne. I passed the night at Zoffingen, a small town in the canton of

Berne, the inhabitants whereof enjoy greater immunities than any other place in that whole canton. They have their own magistrates; and what is peculiar, their own courts of justice, both civil and criminal, which decide in the last resort, without an appeal to Berne. A bailif resides there; but his whole employment consists in collecting the tithes. The town contains about two thousand souls.

Near Zoffingen I entered the canton of Lucerne, and passed through a narrow valley bounded by a chain of hills remarkable for the richness and variety of the hanging woods. As we proceeded the valley expanded; we traversed a gently waving country, and descended to Sursee, a small neat town near the lake of Sempach. From thence we coasted the west side of that lake, which is a small but beautiful piece of water, about three miles in length, and one in breadth. The grounds on each side slope gently to the edge of the water, and are prettily checkered with wood. On the opposite banks of the lake, I observed the town of Sempach, celebrated for the battle which established the liberty of the Swiss; and which I have already mentioned in the preceding letter. The anniversary of that battle, which happened on the 9th of July, 1386, is still commemorated with great solemnity, both at Sempach and Lucerne; and supplies a copious subject for many poems and ballads in the numerous collection of national songs.

On that anniversary, a large body of persons of all ranks assemble on the spot where the battle was fought; a priest ascends a pulpit erected in the open air, and delivers a thanksgiving sermon

on the successful efforts of their ancestors on that happy day, which ensured to their country liberty and independence.

On the conclusion of this sermon, another priest reads a description of the battle, and commemorates the names of those brave Swiss who gloriously sacrificed their lives in defence of their freedom. Having exhorted those who are present to pray for the souls of their countrymen, and of the enemies, who fell in that battle; they all repair instantly to a small chapel, where masses are sung for the souls of the deceased. During this service, the people, falling on their knees, pray for their glorious ancestors, either in the chapel, on whose walls are painted the deeds of the Swiss who immortalized themselves in this conflict, or before four stone crosses which distinguish the place of combat.

L E T T E R 25.

*The Lake of Lucerne — Gerisau — Schweitz —
Origin of the Helvetic Confederacy — William
Tell — Altorf.*

THE Waldstätter See, or the Lake of the Four Cantons, is, from the greatness and sublimity as well as variety of scenery, perhaps the finest body of water in Switzerland. The upper branch, or the lake of Lucerne, is in the form of a cross; the sides of which stretch from Küssnacht to Dalenwal, a small village near Stantz. It is bounded towards the town of Lucerne by cultivated hills sloping gradually to the water, contrasted on the

opposite side by an enormous mass of barren and craggy rocks. Mount Pilate rises boldly from the lake, and is perhaps one of the highest mountains in Switzerland, if estimated from its base, and not from the level of the sea. According to General Pfiffer, its elevation above the lake is more than six thousand feet: nevertheless its height above the Mediterranean is trifling, in comparison with that of the alps we are going to visit; nor indeed does the snow continue all the year upon its summit.

Towards the end of this branch, the lake contracts into a narrow creek scarcely a mile across; soon after, it again widens, and we entered the second branch, or the lake of Schweitz: on the western side the canton of Underwalden, on the eastern that of Schweitz. Here the mountains are more lofty, and infinitely varied: some covered to their very summits with the most lively verdure; others perpendicular and craggy; here forming vast amphitheatres of wood; there jutting into the water in bold promontories.

On the eastern side of this branch, is the village of Gerisau, at the foot of the Rigi: it is the smallest republic in Europe. Its territory is about a league in breadth, and two in length; situated partly on a small neck of land at the edge of the lake, and partly lying upon the rapid declivity of the Rigi. It contains about 1200 inhabitants: they have their general assembly of burgeses, their Landamman, their council of regency, their courts of justice, and their militia. I was informed, that there is not a single horse in the whole territory of the republic; as indeed might well be supposed: for, the only way of arriving at the town is by water,

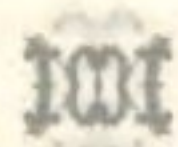
excepting a narrow path down the steep sides of the mountain, which is almost impassable. Gerisau is entirely composed of scattered houses and cottages of a very neat and picturesque appearance. Each dwelling is provided with a field or small garden. The inhabitants are much employed in preparing silk for the manufactures of Basle. This little republic, is under the protection of the four cantons, Lucerne, Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden; and in case of war furnishes its quota of men. To the ambitious politician, who judges of governments by extent of dominion and power, such a diminutive republic thrown into an obscure corner, and scarcely known out of its own contracted territory, must appear unworthy of notice; but the smallest spot of earth on which civil freedom is cultivated and flourishes, cannot fail to interest those who know the true value of liberty and independence; and are convinced, that political happiness does not consist in great opulence and extensive empire.

Towards the end of this branch the lake forms a bay; in the midst of which lies the village of Brunnen, celebrated for the treaty, concluded, in 1315, between Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden. Here I landed, and walked through an agreeable and fertile plain, laid out in meadows, and planted with fruit trees, to Schwitz, which stands on the slope of a hill, at the bottom of two high, sharp, and rugged rocks, called the *Schweitzer-Haken*. Its position is extremely agreeable. The church, which is a large magnificent building, stands in the centre of the place: near it the houses are contiguous to each other: but in the other part they are prettily dispersed about the gentle

acclivities, in the midst of lawns and meadows, and sheltered by groves of trees. The principal object of curiosity in Schweitz, is a complete collection of the celebrated Hedlinger's medals, possessed by his nephew. This collection, which he inherited from his uncle, is very valuable, the medals being all of the finest impressions, and several extremely rare. From these medals Mr. de Mechel published his much esteemed engravings, to which he has prefixed a life of the artist, who was born in the canton of Schweitz, on the 28th of March 1691, and died in 1771, in a very advanced age.

Having reimbarked at Brunnen, we soon entered the third branch, or the lake of Uri; the scenery of which is so grand and sublime, that its impression will never be erased from my mind. Imagine to yourself a deep and narrow lake¹ about nine miles in length, bordered on both sides with rocks uncommonly wild and romantic, and, for the most part, perpendicular; with forests of beech and pine growing down their sides to the very edge of the water: indeed the rocks are so entirely steep and overhanging, that we scarcely observed more than four or five spots, where we could have landed. On the right-hand, upon our first entrance, a detached piece of rock, at a small distance from the shore, engaged our attention. This rock is wholly formed by stones of the size and shape of bricks, so as to appear quite artificial. The same kind of natural masonry may be observed in

¹ In many places it has no bottom, and I have been assured that at a very little distance from the shore the soundings were four thousand feet. RAMOND.



in the lofty cliffs which impend over this lake, not far from Brunnen. It rises to about sixty feet in height; is covered with underwood and shrubs; and reminded me of those crags that shoot up in the Fall of the Rhine near Schaffhausen: but here the lake was as smooth as chrystal; and the silent solemn gloom which reigned in this place, was not less awful and affecting than the tremendous roaring of the cataract in the other. Somewhat further, upon the highest point of the Seelisberg, we observed a small chapel that seemed inaccessible; and below it, the little village of Gruti, near which the three heroes of Switzerland are said to have taken reciprocal oaths of fidelity, when they planned the famous revolution.

On the opposite side appears the chapel of William Tell, erected in honor of that hero, upon the very spot where (it is said) he leaped from the boat, in which he was conveying as a prisoner to Küssnacht. It is built upon a rock that projects into the lake under a hanging wood: a situation amid scenes so strikingly awful, as must strongly affect even the most dull and torpid imagination! On the inside of this chapel, the several actions of William Tell are coarsely painted. While we were viewing them, we observed the countenances of our watermen glistening with exultation, and they related to us, with much spirit and sensibility, the cruelties and tyranny of Gessler, governor of Uri, and the intrepid behaviour of their glorious deliverer. Indeed I have frequently remarked with pleasure, the national enthusiasm which so generally prevails in this country; and have greatly admired the fire and animation with which the people discourse of those famous men among their

ancestors, to whom they are indebted for that happy state of independence which they now enjoy. This laudable spirit is continually supported and encouraged by the number of statues, and other memorials, of the ancient Swiss heroes, which are so common in every town and village throughout Switzerland. Among these, Tell is the most distinguished, and he seems to be the peculiar favorite of the common people: the reason is obvious; for his story partakes greatly of the marvellous.

A few years ago a treatise, entitled *Fable Da-noise*, was published at Berne; in which the author calls in question the history of William Tell. Though his arguments in general are by no means conclusive; yet he mentions two circumstances which, if true, are convincing proofs, that much fiction is interwoven with the whole account: for, the author asserts that the incident of Tell's shooting the apple from the head of his son, is not recorded in any of the contemporary historians, although they give the minutest accounts of the governor's tyranny; and that the first writer who takes notice of it, is Petermann Etterlin of Lucerne, who lived in the latter end of the fifteenth century, near two hundred years after the fact is supposed to have happened. Besides, a story of the same kind is related in the Danish annals by Saxo Grammaticus, with scarcely any difference but that of names: Harold king of Denmark supplies the place of the governor of Uri; and Tocco that of William Tell; and this event, which is said to have happened in 965, is attended also with nearly the same incidents, as those recorded in the Swiss

accounts ². Nevertheless, it is far from being a necessary consequence, that, because the authenticity of the story concerning the apple is liable to some doubts; *therefore* the whole tradition relating to Tell is fabulous. Neither is it a proof against the reality of a fact, that it is not mentioned by any contemporary historians. The general

² As Saxo Grammaticus is an author but little known, and the passage in question is exceedingly curious; I insert it here. It is but justice to add, that some persons question the authenticity of this passage, and suppose it to be spurious.

‘ Nec silentio implicandum, quod sequitur. Toko quidam aliquamdiu regis (i. e. Haraldi Blaatand) stipendia meritis officiis quibus commilitones superabat complures virtutum suarum hostes effecerat. Hic forte sermone inter convivas temulentius habito tam copioso se sagittandi usu callere jactitabat, ut pomum quantumcunque exiguum baculo e distantia superpositum, prima spiculi directione feriret. Quæ vox primum obtreçantium auribus excepta regis etiam auditum attigit. Sed mox principis improbitas patris fiduciam ad filii periculum transtulit, dulcissimum vitæ ejus pignus baculi loco statui imperans. Cui nisi promissionis auctor primo sagittæ conatu pomum impositum excussisset, proprio capite inanis jactantiæ pœnas lueret. Urgebat imperium regis militem majora promissis edere, alienæ obtreçtationis insidiis parum sobriæ vocis jactum carpentibus, &c. —

‘ Exhibitum Toko adolescentem attentius monuit, ut æquis auribus capiteque indeflexo quam patientissime strepitum jaculi venientis exciperet, ne levi corporis motu efficacissimæ artis experientiam frustraretur. Præterea demendæ formidinis consilium circumspiciens, vultum ejus, ne viso telo terreretur, avertit. Tribus deinde sagittis pharetra expositis, prima quam nervo inferuit proposito obstaculo incidit. —

‘ Interrogatus autem a rege Toko cur plura pharetræ spicula detraxisset, cum fortunam arcus semel duntaxat experimento prosequi debuisset: “ Ut in te,” “ inquit,” “ primi errorem reliquorum acumine vindicarem, ne mea forte innocentia pœnam tui impunitatem experiretur violentia.” “ Quo tam libero dicto & sibi fortitudinis titulum deberi docuit, & regis imperium pœna dignum ostendit.’

Lib. x. p. 286. edit. Lipsic. 1771.

history of William Tell is repeatedly celebrated in several old German songs, so remarkable for their ancient dialect and simplicity, as almost to raise the deeds they celebrate above all reasonable suspicion: add to this, the constant tradition of the country, together with two chapels erected some centuries ago, in memory of his exploits.

The three cantons were so much offended with the author for throwing any doubt upon the exploits of their ancient hero, that they presented a remonstrance to the sovereign council of Berne: and the pamphlet was publicly burnt at Uri. In this instance their national prejudices (if they really deserve that name) become, in some measure, meritorious and respectable.

Upon our landing at Fluellen, I had an opportunity of observing that the cross-bow is still much used in these parts, as I saw several very young boys, each with that instrument in his hand. Observing a butt at a small distance from the place, I gave them to understand, that those who hit the mark should receive a penny for their dexterity. Upon this intimation, three boys took aim successively, two of whom touched the very centre of the butt, and obtained the prize accordingly: but, the third missing, I made him shoot till he hit the mark; which, after two or three trials, he at length performed.

From Fluellen we walked to Altorf, the capital burgh of the canton of Uri, situated in a narrow vale almost entirely surrounded by stupendous mountains. It contains several neat houses; the tops whereof are covered with large stones, in order to prevent the roofs being carried away by those violent hurricanes which are frequent in these mountainous countries.

When the greatest part of Helvetia was subject to the empire; the inhabitants of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, had long enjoyed the most considerable privileges, particularly the right of being governed by their own magistrates: the clergy and many of the nobles, indeed, had fiefs and subjects in those respective territories; but the bulk of the people formed several communities almost totally independent. During the twelfth century, various disputes between these three cantons and the emperors, united them more firmly than ever; and they were accustomed, every ten years, to renew formally their alliance. Such was their situation at the death of Frederick II. in 1250. From this period, or soon afterwards, commences the interregnum in the empire: during which time of anarchy and confusion, the nobles and bishops endeavouring to extend their power, and to encroach upon the privileges of the people; Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, put themselves under the protection of Rhodolph of Hapsburgh, who, in 1273, being chosen emperor, terminated the interregnum. Rhodolph received a small revenue from these cantons, and appointed a governor, who had cognizance in all criminal causes: the rights, however, and privileges of the people were expressly reserved.

Rhodolph, some time after his accession to the imperial throne, listened to the ambitious schemes of his son Albert, who was desirous to form Helvetia into a dutchy. For this purpose the emperor purchased the domains of several abbeys, and other considerable fiefs in Switzerland, as well in the canton of Schwitz as in the neighbouring territories. The three cantons, induced by the great

increase of power, which the emperor gained by this acquisition, prudently renewed their alliance, and obtained a confirmation of their privileges: which, upon the death of Rhodolph, was confirmed by his successor Adolphus of Nassau. But when Albert was afterwards elected emperor, he refused to ratify their rights: and, in order totally to subdue the people, placed over them two governors, who were guilty of many flagitious acts of tyranny and oppression.

Under these circumstances Werner the Staufach of Schweitz, Walter Furst of Uri, and Arnold de Melchthal of Underwalden, planned the famous revolution, which took place January 13, 1308, and restored liberty to the three cantons. Albert, while he was preparing to attack them, was assassinated by his nephew John of Hapsburgh³. In 1315, Leopold duke of Austria marched against the confederate cantons, at the head of twenty thousand troops, and, endeavouring to force his way into Schweitz at the straits of Morgarten, received a total defeat from thirteen hundred Swiss, who were posted upon the mountains. If we may believe contemporary historians, the Swiss lost but fourteen men in this memorable engagement, which ensured their independence. In the same year, the three cantons contracted a perpetual alliance, which was ratified at Brunnen; and is the grand foundation of the Helvetic Confederacy. Such were the feeble beginnings of a league, since become so formidable by the accession of ten more cantons, and by the additional strength of its numerous allies; and it is remarkable, that Switzerland

³ See Letter 14.

is the only country which, on the one side, has confined the limits of the German empire; and, on the other, has set bounds to the French monarchy, which the latter has never transgressed.

The name of Schweitzerland, or Switzerland, which originally comprehended only the three cantons of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, was afterwards extended to all Helvetia. It derived that appellation either from the canton of Schwitz, as having particularly distinguished itself in the revolution of 1308, and also at the battle of Morgarten; or because the Austrians called all the inhabitants of these mountainous parts, by the general denomination of Schweitzers.

Switzerland was the rock on which the House of Austria split, during more than a century. Blinded with resentment against their former subjects, and anxious to recover their lost domains in these parts; the several dukes led in person considerable armies to subdue a nation, whose spirit was unconquerable; and to obtain possession of a country, which, from its situation, was easily defended by a handful of men against the most numerous troops. Within the period above-mentioned, they neglected several opportunities of aggrandizing themselves in other parts; and, slighting what was more feasible, bent their whole efforts to acquire what in its very nature was unattainable. The consequence of this mistaken policy, was, a continued succession of defeats, attended with a prodigious expence, and the loss of their bravest troops: until at length, convinced of their error, they totally relinquished an attempt, in which they had expended so much fruitless blood and treasure. But although several emperors of that House occasionally made alliances

with the Swiss cantons; yet it was not till the treaty of Westphalia that their independence was fully and finally acknowledged, by Ferdinand III. and the whole empire.

The government of Uri and Schwitz is entirely democratical, and nearly the same. The supreme power resides in the people at large, who are divided into several communities, from which are chosen the councils of regency. In the *Lands-gemeind*, or general assembly, the Landamman, and the principal magistrates, are elected; and every burgher, at the age of fourteen in the cantons of Uri and Unterwalden; and of fifteen in Schwitz; has a right to vote. The councils of regency in Uri and Schwitz consist each of sixty members, and reside at the capital burghs. In this council the executive power is vested, and from this body the principal magistrates are chosen.

These two cantons contain, including their subjects, about fifty thousand souls, and in case of necessity could furnish above twelve thousand militia. All the Catholic cantons enjoy considerable subsidies from France. Every burgher, at the age of fourteen, in Uri, receives annually about six livres, or five shillings; the Landamman and the magistrates more in proportion. The canton of Schwitz being for some time discontented with France, withdrew its troops from that service: but this year the matter has been accommodated; and the king pays annually to every male child of a burgher four livres, commencing from the time of his birth.

The same kind of soil, and the same sort of productions, are common to the two cantons: the whole country being rugged and mountainous,

consists chiefly of pasture, but raises little corn, and has no vines. We cannot but observe with astonishment, to what a degree of fertility the natives have improved a land, naturally barren, and for which they fought with as much zeal and intrepidity, as if they contended for the richest plains of Sicily or Asia Minor. In these little democratical states, sumptuary laws are not necessary; for, they scarcely know, even in idea, what luxury is. Such indeed is the purity, or (as some perhaps would call it) the austerity of morals, which still prevails among these people, as cannot easily be imagined by the inhabitants of great and opulent cities: and I cannot reflect on that affectionate patriotism, which so strongly attaches them to their country, without calling to mind that beautiful description of the Swiss peasant, in Goldsmith's Traveller:

*" Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
" And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms:
" And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
" Clings close and closer to the mother's breast;
" So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
" But bind him to his native mountains more."*

Every step we now advance is treading, as it were, upon sacred ground; monuments continually occurring of those memorable battles, by which the Swiss rescued themselves from oppression, and secured the enjoyment of their invaluable freedom. I am now indeed in the very centre of civil liberty; would I could add of religious too! but the church of Rome is here exclusively established. It must be acknowledged, however, that this intolerant spirit is not wholly confined

to the Catholic cantons; for, in those where the Protestants prevail, Calvinism is alone admitted: and thus a nation, who prides herself upon her freedom, denies the free exercise of religion to every other sect except that which predominates. Is not this striking at the first principle, and most valuable privilege, of genuine liberty?

Long as my letter already is, I cannot forbear mentioning a peculiar custom observed in some of these democratical states: every person who is chosen for a bailliage, or any lucrative office, is obliged to pay a certain stipulated sum into the public fund. This practice is attended with one ill consequence at least; as the successful candidate is in some measure authorized to stretch his prerogatives, in order to swell the profits of his charge. Accordingly it is a general remark, that in the common bailliages the bailifs, appointed by the popular cantons, are more apt to be guilty of exactions than those of the aristocratical republics.

LETTER 26.

*Canton of Underwalden — Sarne — Saxelen —
Tomb and Character of Nicholas de Flue —
Stantz — Engelberg — Passage over the Suren
Alps to Altorf.*

INSTEAD of proceeding, as in my former tour, from Lucerne to Altorf by water, I made an agreeable excursion to Sarne, Saxelen, and Stantz, in the canton of Underwalden, visited

the abbey of Engelberg, and traversed the Suren Alps to Altorf.

Having dispatched my baggage by water to Altorf, I walked, in company with Mr. Meyer, member of the Great Council of Lucerne, through a pleasant plain, lying between Mount Pilate and an opposite ridge of hills, to Winke, a village situated on an inlet of the lake of Lucerne. There I took boat, and rowing across the inlet, disembarked near Alpnach, in the canton of Unterwalden, and continued along a foot-way, which winds through enclosures of rich pastureland, browsed by numerous herds of fine cattle, and prettily checkered with scattered cottages. Having crossed a small river, I arrived at Sarne, the capital burgh of that division of the canton called Oberwalden, wherein the *Land-rath*, or supreme court of judicature, assembles for the purpose of deciding civil and criminal processes. This tribunal is composed of fifty-eight judges, who are chosen by the people, and continue in office for life. In criminal affairs of any notoriety, each of these fifty-eight is empowered to bring into court two individuals; and this whole tribunal, thus consisting of a hundred and seventy-four members, assembles in a large open hall in the town-house, and passes final sentence.

At Sarne I embarked upon the Aa, and ascending its stream, entered the lake of Sarne: this piece of water, about three miles long, and one and a half broad, is pleasantly enclosed between the mountains, and its rising borders are richly variegated with pastures and trees. I landed at Saxelen, which stands on its western shore; a neat village much frequented in these parts, as

being the native place of the celebrated saint and patriot Nicholas de Flue, to whose honor a church has been lately erected at a considerable expense. The interior is ornamented in a pleasing style of architecture. Ten elegant columns of black marble support the roof: they are about twenty-four feet in height, and many of them are of a single piece. They were hewn out of a quarry in the Melchthal, about nine miles from Saxelen, and were dragged from thence by the peasants, who voluntarily performed this task, which they considered as an act of religious duty: a laborious enterprise, to convey such heavy burdens down steep precipices and over rugged pathless rocks, where they could neither be assisted by horses or oxen!

Under a glass-case in the midst of this church, are deposited the bones of this favorite object of national worship, fantastically ornamented, according to the Roman Catholic custom, with gold and precious stones. His real burial place is still to be seen in a small adjoining chapel: it is a simple grave-stone, on which his figure is coarsely carved in stone, the work of the age in which he lived. At a small height over this ancient monument, is placed another grave-stone, bearing also his figure, executed in later times, less rude, but still of coarse workmanship.

On entering this chapel, I observed numerous pilgrims of both sexes, who were kneeling before his tomb, and praying with the greatest fervency. Many, in the ardor of devotion, threw themselves between the two grave-stones, and stretching themselves upon the most ancient figure, repeatedly kissed and embraced it.

Nicholas de Flue, this object of national enthusiasm, was born at Saxelen in 1417. Descended from an ancient family, he signalized himself in defence of his country, and particularly during the war which the Swiss supported against Sigismond archduke of Austria. He was no less remarkable for humanity than valor. He remonstrated to his countrymen preparing to pillage and burn the convent of St. Margaret near Dieffenhofen. He exclaimed: "If God grants you the victory over your enemies, use it with moderation; and spare those edifices which are consecrated to him." This remonstrance was attended with effect, and the convent was saved from destruction. To the most excellent qualities of the heart and understanding, to great political sagacity he added the exterior graces of figure, dignity of character, and the most winning affability of manners. Raised by his countrymen to several high employments in the state, he repeatedly declined the office of landamman from motives of delicacy, because he disapproved the principles of the governing party. At length, hurried away by his detestation of evil, and a zeal for monkish devotion, he quitted his family in the fiftieth year of his age, and retiring from the world, in a fit of gloomy superstition turned hermit. The place of his retreat was at Ranft, a few miles from Saxelen; there he built an hermitage and a small chapel, and practised all the severities required by that austere mode of life with the strictest observance.

But the flame of patriotism, although smothered in his breast by an ill-directed zeal for mistaken duties, was not extinguished; and he was

the happy instrument in restoring Switzerland from the impending horrors of civil discord. At the conclusion of the war with Charles the Bold, Friburgh and Soleure contracted an alliance with Zurich, Berne, and Lucerne. This treaty being considered by Uri, Schweitz, Underwalden, Zug, and Glaris, as a breach of the former union, those five cantons refused to receive them. After various disputes and fruitless conferences, the deputies of the eight confederate cantons assembled, in 1481, at Santz, in order to compromise the differences.

Both sides, however, were so heated with mutual animosities, that the deputies were on the point of separating without effecting a reconciliation, and a civil war appeared inevitable. In this crisis of affairs, de Flue no sooner heard, in the depth of his solitude, of those public dissensions which threatened a fatal rupture between the confederate cantons, than his patriotism prevailed over his superstition; and he quitted his unprofitable hermitage, in order to exert those active and public virtues, the very lowest of which singly outweighs whole years of useless and unrequired mortifications. Accordingly this extraordinary man, having, though in the 64th year of his age, travelled during the night, arrived at Santz on the very morning in which the deputies were preparing for their departure. He earnestly conjured them to remain: and, having prevailed upon them once more to assemble, he so forcibly represented to them the destructive consequences which would attend their disunion, that they chose him arbiter of the dispute. By his sole mediation all differences between the contending parties were amicably

adjusted; and Friburgh and Soleure were, by his advice, instantly received into the Helvetic Confederacy: such was the effect of his persuasive and conciliatory eloquence! Having thus happily composed the public dissensions, he returned to his hermitage, where he died, in 1487, in the 70th year of his age, regretted and esteemed by all Switzerland. Such a general opinion of his extreme piety prevailed among his contemporaries, that the bigotry of those times ascribed to him an exemption from the common wants of humanity.

In the register of the church of Saxelen, the following notice is inscribed for 1485, the year antecedent to his death. “ In 1417, Nicholas de Flue, a saint, was born in the parish of Saxelen; “ who afterwards retired into a desert called Ranft, “ where God sustained him during eighteen years, “ without eating or drinking for a long time, “ namely when this was written; and he is now “ in good estate, and of holy life.”

On his tomb is inscribed the following epitaph: “ Nicholas de Flue quitted his wife and children “ to go into the desert: he served God nineteen “ years and a half without taking any sustenance. “ He died 1487.”

This frivolous epitaph strongly marks the bigotted spirit of that dark age in which it was composed: the narrow-minded author, totally overlooking the patriot in the hermit, saw nothing so truly meritorious in the life of the deceased, as his having suppressed those social and public energies which dignify human nature, in order to practise the debasing austerities of a superstitious religionist. — He ought to have inscribed, “ To the memory of Nicholas de Flue, who quitted his hermitage to

appear in the world; who restored peace and harmony to the republics of Switzerland, and who served God by serving his country."

From Saxelen we intended to have visited Rans, de Flue's hermitage, and from thence to have proceeded down the Melchthal and over the mountains to Engelberg; but as the evening was already beginning to close, we durst not venture along so difficult a passage, which would have employed us at least five hours; we thought it, therefore, most prudent to continue our route towards Stantz. We followed the footpaths, which wind agreeably, sometimes through forests, sometimes over the fields and meadows; and passed through a fertile but wilder and more romantic part of the canton, than that which we traversed in the morning. We continued for some way at the foot of the Stantzberg, crossed a small plain that was formerly a lake, in which staples for mooring vessels are occasionally discovered; and, in about three hours after our departure from Saxelen, arrived at Stantz, in the dusk of the evening.

About three miles from Stantz is a small wood called the *Kern-wald*, which we passed through in our route from Saxelen; it would not have been worthy of mention, if it did not separate the canton into two divisions, called ⁴ *Oberwald* and *Underwald*. Formerly the whole canton was under the same general administration; but the inhabitants of the two districts separating upon some dispute, have since formed two republics, and have each their *lands-gemeind*, or general assembly,

⁴ Above the wood, and Below the wood; *wald* in German signifying a wood.

assembly, their landamman, and council of regency^s: for the management of external affairs, there is a joint-council, chosen equally by the two divisions; at the Helvetic Diet they send but one deputy, and regulate their vote by mutual consent.

Stantz is the seat of civil and criminal judicature; and it is worthy of remark, that every male of the age of thirty is permitted to give his vote for the acquittance or condemnation of a criminal.

Stantz, the capital of Unterwalden, is situated in a beautiful plain of pasture, about two or three miles in breadth, at the foot of the Stantzberg, and at a little distance from the lake of Lucerne. The town and environs, which are delightfully sprinkled with numerous cottages, are, for so small a place, extremely populous, comprising, perhaps, not less than five thousand souls. The church is a tolerably handsome building, and is decorated in the inside with ten black marble pillars of large dimensions, but not, so beautiful as those at Saxelen. The women in these parts dress their heads in a singular manner, and extremely unbecoming: they wear black-beaver cocked hats, similar to those of the men, with black ears to their caps, which almost conceal their hair.

The next morning the abbot of Engelberg, having been previously informed of our intended visit, politely sent horses to Stantz; and we rode through a fertile valley, enclosed between the Stantzberg and a chain of hills, until we arrived at Graffen-ort, a small villa belonging to the abbot, about two leagues from Stantz. Here we began

^s The revenues of the state are divided between them in the proportion of two thirds to one third. RAMOND.

to ascend along a road winding by the side of a steep precipice, and through "*unfanned forests*" of beech intermingled with poplar, mountainash, Spanish chestnuts, and pines, the torrent Aa impetuously foaming in a stony channel, and forming a succession of cataracts. The wild horrors of the circumjacent rocks, the incessant roaring of the waters, and the solitary gloom of the forest, reminded me of Gray's beautiful Ode on the Grande Chartreuse, in which he describes similar scenes with a sublimity and truth which every person of taste, who travels through these magnificent regions, must feel and admire.

Per invias rupes, fera per juga,

Clivosque præruptos, sonantes

Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem.

Having issued from the dark forest, we descended for a little way; and unanimously broke into an exclamation of surprise and delight, as we suddenly looked down upon a picturesque plain of an oval shape beautifully wooded, watered by several lively streams, enclosed within a circle of gentle hills, and terminated by a majestic amphitheatre of "*cloud-capt alps*:" toward the extremity of this plain, the abbey, a large quadrangular building of stone, is situated, at the foot of the *Engelberg*, or Mountain of *Angels*, from which the whole district takes its name. On alighting from our horses, the abbot politely received and conducted us into a large saloon, where soon afterwards dinner was served with all the plenty of feudal times, and all the comforts of the present age. The company at table consisted of the abbot, five or six benedictines, ourselves,

and our servants, who, according to the custom of the place, sat down to the same hospitable board with their masters. This intermixture of society, the politeness of the worthy abbot, and the facetious cheerfulness of one among the fathers, rendered the repast as agreeable as it was uncommon. After dinner we visited the library, which contains about ten thousand volumes: and, among many rare editions, above two hundred printed in the fifteenth century. I noticed a much larger collection of modern historical and miscellaneous works, than are usually found within the walls of a monastery; which does honor to the taste of the abbot, and proves him to be a warm friend to polite literature.

The weather being fine and clear, I strayed about the environs; admiring the scattered hamlets, the beautiful tufts of wood, and the lively streams which murmur through the plain: of these, one called the Melt-bach, which I observed issuing copiously from the ground, begins to flow on the first melting of the snow in the month of May, and ceases towards the end of September; and the Griesen-bach, that rises at the foot of Mount Blake, runs only from mid-day to the setting sun. Several other torrents, that pour down from the neighbouring glaciers, and numerous springs that burst from the ground near the abbey, help to supply the Aa, which rushes from the Suren alps, and, swelled with these tributary waters, hastens to throw itself into the lake of Lucerne. The amphitheatre of cloud-capt mountains, is formed by the Melkleberg, the Arniberg, the Blakeberg, the Spitze-stock, the Suren alps with their brown peaks boldly rising from the

bosom of the snow, the Engelberg towering in naked majesty, and, the most elevated and most beautiful in the whole chain, Mount Titlis, supporting on its top an immense glacier.

About seven in the afternoon we sat down to supper; in the midst of the repast we were suddenly struck with an awful thunder-storm, which, though it could not be called the music of the spheres, or such as, according to the legends of the abbey, was performed on the top of the Engelberg, by a choir of angels, at the consecration of the convent; yet produced a most sublime effect, when re-echoed by the surrounding mountains.

The abbot of this convent, chosen by a majority of sixteen benedictines, who compose the chapter, is sovereign lord over the land of Engelberg, a small tract of country about sixty miles in circumference, and under the protection of Lucerne, Uri, Schweitz, and Underwalden. The only habitable part of this district is the small plain in which the abbey is situated, that contains fifteen hundred souls: the remaining portion, being entirely mountainous, affords in summer a retreat to numerous herds of cattle. The abbot, to whom we were indebted for so polite a reception, is Leodigar Saltzman, a native of Lucerne, who, since his elevation to his present dignity, has been a kind and indulgent master: finding many of his subjects extremely poor and indolent, he has excited them to industry; and, in order to assist them during the winter months, when agriculture is suspended, he employs them in winding silk, which he imports from Italy. He possesses very considerable power, which renders him nearly absolute. In all criminal cases he arrests and imprisons; appoints the person who

examines; can order, if he thinks it necessary, the infliction of torture; and can pardon or mitigate the sentence given by the tribunal of the country, called *landsgericht*. In civil causes his influence is very considerable; he appoints, from twelve candidates selected by the people, the seven judges, who, in conjunction with the *Thalamman* and *Stathalter*, form the above-mentioned *landsgericht*, which decides in the first resort: he can also displace them if he pleases; and absolutely nominates all the judges of the *geistlichen-gericht*, or ecclesiastical court, which receives appeals from the decisions of the former tribunal. His power is restricted in the following instances. If he is engaged in a lawsuit with an individual, the award of the country tribunal is final; and if with the whole community, the question is decided by the four cantons of Lucerne, Uri, Schwitz, und Unterwalden.

His revenues amount to about L. 5000; and are derived partly from tithes of certain estates in the free bailliages of Switzerland, from a few feudal rights, but principally from the exportation of cheeses. Beside those which are made on the pastures belonging to the abbey, he purchases others from the peasants of his little territory, and disposes of the whole on his own account. About eighteen hundred cows, including those which are the property of the convent, are possessed by the natives of Engelberg, and annually supply cream for about 10,000 cheeses, each weighing from 25 to 50 pounds, and selling, on an average, for fifteen florins, or one pound five shillings per hundred weight: and it may be calculated that the abbot circulates annually to the value of L. 4000. This revenue, however, cannot be considered as his

own private property; for he pays the current expenses of the abbey.

Several ineffectual expeditions having been made towards attaining the summit of Mount Titlis, the most elevated mountain in these parts, and perhaps scarcely inferior to the Schreckhorn and Jungfrau-horn; it was for a long time considered as inaccessible: but, as tradition reported, that in the year 1739, three men had ascended it, Mr. Freygrabend, a native of Engelberg, and physician to the abbot, a few days after my departure from the convent, succeeded in a similar attempt. The following account of this expedition is extracted from a German letter, written by the physician himself to a friend at Lucerne.

“Early in the morning on the 14th of September, the weather being fine and clear, I set out with eleven companions, among whom were Jerom Dopler and Conrad Stocher, two friars of the convent. About two in the morning, after ascending through Gerschne, and Unter and Ober-laub, we reached, at break of day, the summit of the Laubergrat. Here we enjoyed a fine view over the canton of Underwalden, the lake and canton of Lucerne, the free bailliages of Switzerland, and the canton of Zug. Having taken some refreshment, and reposed ourselves a quarter of an hour, we put on our crampons, and pursued our route, eager, like the giants of old, to scale the steep sides of Mount Faulblatten. We continued for about an hour along the piked ridge of this mountain, tottering by the side of tremendous precipices, and twice climbing an ascent almost perpendicular. We could not observe any trace of the smallest vegetation. Having gained the highest point of the

Faulblatten, we arrived at a glacier, which being fortunately covered with fresh snow, rendered the ice less slippery than usual.

“ Hitherto our course had been attended with some danger, but from hence we ascended, and reached, with little difficulty, the top of the Titlis, called *Nollen*. But here we were obliged to cross a deep chasm, and to mount the sides of the ice, which were as perpendicular as a wall, by forming steps for our feet with the iron spikes of our poles: below us was a valley of ice about sixteen miles in length, descending rapidly towards Oberhasli. It was now about ten in the morning, and the sun was extremely bright. Having walked a few paces, the prospect was on all sides open and unbounded. This sublime, yet dreary scene, though it surpasses all description, made an impression on my mind which I shall never forget.

“ Here the painter and poet would find ample and endless employment, if the colors of the former and the conceptions of the latter could resist the effects of the extreme cold. The objects which caught our attention, were the alps of the Val-lais, Berne, and Savoy, with their glaciers and vallies of ice, a majestic and tremendous scene. Among numerous mountains which rose before us, Mont-Blanc, though at some distance, reared its head above the rest; near us towered the Schreckhorn, Wetterhorn, and Jungfrauhorn, but less elevated in appearance than the point on which we stood. Below us we observed a valley of ice about two miles in breadth, and of such immense length, that one extremity seemed to join Mont-Blanc, and the other to be closed by the Titlis. To the east, the Rothstock, the Plangen, and the mountains of Uri, neither so wild nor so

elevated as those to the south; and towards the north-west, the eye reposed itself over the less dreary and more cultivated parts of Switzerland, as far as the borders of Alsace and Suabia. Immediately below us we noticed the abbey; and we heard the sound of several mortars, which the abbot ordered to be fired as a signal that we were also seen: by means of a small telescope I observed the fire and smoke; and five minutes elapsed before the sound reached us, not in a strait direction, but re-echoed between the surrounding rocks. We had proposed to kindle a fire, and to let off some hand-grenades, but the cold prevented us from striking fire. Not being able to support its extremity more than three quarters of an hour, although the sun shone very bright, and we kept ourselves in continual motion, we placed a black flag on the highest point.

“We were as fortunate in descending as in mounting. We came to the Under-Titlis at half past eleven; to the Laubergrat at one, where we again took some refreshment; and having let off our grenades, we reached the abbey at five in the afternoon. We felt no other inconvenience from this expedition, than that our faces were swelled, and our skins peeled, from the reflection of the sun; and that for some hours after my return to Engelberg, I lost my sight and my hearing, both which however I soon recovered. Undoubtedly the Titlis is the highest mountain in Switzerland, excepting Mont-Blanc, to which it is not much inferior.”

It is to be regretted, that this expedition was only a mere object of curiosity: and that the ingenious physician carried with him neither

thermometer nor barometer. His assertion that the Titlis is higher than any mountain in Switzerland, will, for this reason, and without farther proofs, admit of much doubt; and its elevation, though very considerable, must be greatly inferior to that of Mont-Blanc; as will appear, by considering that the expedition from the plain of Engelberg to the top of the Titlis was performed in eight hours; whereas Dr. Paccard and James Balma employed fifteen in attaining the summit of Mont-Blanc; and the place from which they took their departure, is probably much higher above the level of the sea than the valley of Engelberg.

August 25.

Travellers, in going from Engelberg to Altorf, usually return to Stantz or Buochs, embark on the lake of Lucerne, and proceed the rest of the way by water; but as I had already visited those places, I preferred following the route across the mountains. The morning being obscure and rainy, we were detained till nine o'clock, when the weather clearing up I set out, in company with Messrs. Balthazar and Meyer, of Lucerne. Passing through the plain of Engelberg, we admired, on our left, a fine waterfall, which precipitates itself from mount Engel, and in about a league arrived at a cottage belonging to the abbey, where we found two peasants employed in making cheeses, and where we regaled ourselves with some excellent cream. From this point we mounted gently by the side of the Aa, leaving on our right the high Suren alps, whose pointed tops occasionally burst forth amid the clouds and vapors; about a mile from the cottage we quitted the abbot's horses, walked up a gradual ascent, passed a superb

cataract of the Aa, and reached a chapel noted in these parts for a small bell, which, according to tradition, was the gift of a French traveller. Near this chapel we observed a hut, which is in the canton of Uri, and from thence the ascent was steeper, but not difficult; we crossed many drifts of snow, and were incommoded by a keen wind and frequent showers of sleet, hail, and rain. At length, in about four hours after our departure from the abbey, we reached a cross planted on the highest point; from which elevation we should have enjoyed a most superb view, greatly admired by travellers, on one side towards Uri and the chain of the St. Gothard, and on the other towards Engelberg and the lake of Lucerne, if the weather had not totally obscured the prospect. From this point the Titlis is much extolled for its beautiful and majestic appearance.

From hence we descended the Enkeberg into a most barren region, amid a harvest of pointed rocks, and over numerous drifts of snow, and fallen fragments of stone, intermixed with small patches of russet herbage, which contributed to render the scene still more dreary. Our descent along a bare slippery rock of slate, or in the beds of torrents, or over large masses of ice and snow, continued above an hour and an half, when we observed several huts lying in a small plain. From their first appearance we concluded that we should presently reach them, but the precipices were so steep, the paths so rugged, and the distance so much greater than we at first imagined, that it employed us above an hour and an half.

The little valley, in which these huts are situated, is called *Wald-nacht Alp*, contains a small

quantity of underwood, and feeds a hundred and thirty-three cows, beside a few sheep, goats, and hogs. The peasants employed in tending the cattle and making cheese, usually arrive on the 20th of June, and remain about a hundred days: the owner of the hut in which we dried our clothes, makes every day, during that period, two cheeses of twenty-five pounds each, from the milk of eighteen cows. Having taken some refreshment, and recovered our fatigue, we continued along the valley, through some groves of poplars and firs, and at its furthest extremity we came to a single cottage seated on an eminence, the first house on this side which is habitable in winter. A little further we had a prospect of the town and environs of Altorf; the fertile vale of Schackeren, which, though a very steep ascent, yet from this elevation seemed a level plain; the lake of Uri, scarcely visible, which looked like a small rivulet; and the distant mountains reaching beyond the St. Gothard. The descent, through rich fields and pastures, was extremely steep and tedious, as the grass was rendered slippery by the rain; and we did not arrive at Altorf till seven in the evening, wet and exceedingly fatigued, but much pleased with our expedition. This passage from Engelberg to Altorf is estimated at seven leagues. A *chasseur* may perform it in four hours; a traveller accustomed to mountains, in six; and a person unused to such fatigue, will require eight or ten hours.

LETTER 27.

Valley of Schœllenen — Devil's Bridge — Valley of Urseren — Valley and Mountain of St. Gothard — Sources of the Tesino and Reufs.

St. Gothard, August 3.

SWITZERLAND is a most delightful country, and merits the particular observation of the traveller, as well for the diversity of the several governments, as for the wonderful beauties of nature: but the impositions of the inkeepers, and the difficulty of procuring horses ⁶, are inevitable taxes for the enjoyment of these its *delights*. These little inconveniences, however, should be borne with patience and good-humor; nor will I trouble you with any splenetic complaints of those unpleasant circumstances which must occur to all travellers ⁷.

⁶ I would recommend to all travellers, who traverse the canton of Uri in order to visit the alps, either to hire horses at Lucerne, or to bespeak them against their arrival at Altorf. If we fortunately had not taken the latter precaution, we should have found no less difficulty in procuring horses in 1785, than in 1776; notwithstanding all the good offices of our landlord at the Black Lion; who, knowing that I was the author of Letters on Switzerland, was extremely anxious to wipe away certain aspersions, which, in the beginning of this letter, seem to glance at his native town. The two Mr. Cliffords, whom we met at Engelberg, and who, to our great satisfaction, accompanied us in our tour as far as Geneva, were obliged to pursue their journey on foot, not being able to procure more than one horse, which was appropriated to their baggage.

⁷ In my different tours in this country I have been but once obliged to pay more for my dinner than it was worth. People that travel without ostentation and understand the language

On quitting Altorf, we passed at first through a fertile plain of pasture, in which the inhabitants were employed in mowing the second crop of hay; and in about nine miles began ascending. The road winds continually along the steep sides of the mountains; and the Reufs in many places entirely fills up the bottom of the valley, which is very narrow: that river sometimes appeared several hundred yards belows us; here rushing a considerable way through a forest of pines; there falling in cascades, and losing itself in the valley. We passed it several times, over bridges of a single arch, and beheld it tumbling under our feet, in channels which it had forced through the solid rock; innumerable torrents roaring down the sides of the mountains; which were sometimes bare, sometimes finely wooded, with here and there some fantastic trees clothing the sides of the precipice, and half obscuring the river from our view. The darkness and solitude of the forests; the occasional liveliness and variety of the verdure; immense fragments of rock blended with enormous masses of ice; rocks of an astonishing height piled upon one another, and shutting in the vale; — such are the sublime and magnificent scenes with which this romantic country abounds.

Near Wafen, is the valley of Meyen; the torrent that dashes through it, and falls into the Reufs, forms a series of most superb cataracts, which the traveller may enjoy by venturing to

will be as little exposed to the impositions of the innkeepers, who, thinking themselves as good and better than their guests, never fail to make them pay dear enough for their haughtiness. RAMOND.

the edge of the precipice, and supporting himself against an impending pine, that overlooks the gulf.

We set out this morning early from Wafen, a small village where we passed the night; and continued advancing for some way on a rugged ascent, through the same wild and beautiful tract of country, which I have just attempted to describe. We could scarcely walk a hundred yards without crossing several torrents, that rolled with violence from the tops of the mountains⁸. This being one of the great passages into Italy, we met many pack-horses laden with merchandise⁹: and as the road in particular parts is very narrow, it required some dexterity in the horses to pass one another without jostling. These roads, impending over precipices, cannot fail of inspiring terror to those travellers, who are unaccustomed to them; and more particularly as the mules and horses do not keep in the middle of the track, but continue crossing from the side of the mountain towards the edge of an abyss, then turn assant abruptly; thus forming, if I may so express myself, a constant zig-zag.

Thus far the valley of Schoellenen appeared to be tolerably well peopled; and we passed through several villages situated towards the bottom and less narrow part of the valley: the sides of the mountains were occasionally strewed with cottages; covered with forests; or enriched with pastures. Still continuing to ascent, the country beyond Wafen suddenly changing, became more

⁸ The pureness and limpidity of the waters in these parts renders them almost invisible when they are calm. RAMOND.

⁹ Horses which, having a broader hoof, sink less into the snow, are in these mountains used preferably to mules. R.

wild and perfectly desert: there were no traces of any trees, except here and there a stubbed pine; the rocks were bare, craggy, and impending; not the least sign of any habitation; and scarcely a blade of grass to be seen. We then came to a bridge thrown across a deep chasm over the Reufs, which here forms a considerable cataract down the shagged sides of the mountain, and over immense fragments of rock which it has undermined in its course. This bridge is called *Teufels-bruck*, or the Devil's bridge. As we stood upon the bridge admiring the cataract, we were covered with a kind of drizzling rain; the river throwing up the spray to a considerable height. These are sublime scenes of horror, of which those who have not been spectators, can form no idea: they defy the representations of painting or poetry¹.

Not far from this desolate landscape, the road led us into the *Urner-loch*, a subterraneous passage cut through a rock of granite², which opened at the opposite entrance into the serene and cultivated valley of Urseren: the objects that presented themselves were, a village backed by a high mountain, on the sides of which was a wood

¹ Many travellers have been disappointed on the first view of the Devil's bridge. It ought therefore to be remarked, that the bridge itself, though of difficult execution, is a trifling object, and not so stupendous as many others in Switzerland; and that it is the wild and majestic scenery that astonishes and exalts the beholder.

² This passage was hollowed in 1707, by Peter Moretini, a native of Val-Maggia, at the expense of the inhabitants in the valley of Urseren. It is nine feet in breadth, ten in height, and two hundred and twenty in length.

of pines; peasants at work in the fields; cattle feeding in the meadows; and the river, which lately dashed over rude fragments of rock in a continual cataract, now flowed silently and smoothly; while the sun, which had been hidden from us in the deep valley, here shone in its full splendor. In general there is a regular gradation from extreme wildness to high cultivation; but here the transition was abrupt, and the change instantaneous: it was like the lifting up of a curtain, and had all the appearance of enchantment.

In this valley are four villages, Urseren³, Hospital, Realp, and Zundorf; forming a small republic under the protection of Uri. The territory of this little commonwealth is about nine miles in length and two in breadth, and contains about thirteen hundred souls. The people elect, in their general assembly, their *Thalamman* or chief, as also some other magistrates: and there is a permanent council of fifteen members, who assemble in each of the different districts. The inhabitants enjoy great privileges; but are not absolutely independent: for in civil causes an appeal lies from their courts of justice to Altorf; and in criminal proceedings, two deputies from the government of Uri are present at the trial, and deliver to the judges of the valley the opinion of the council of Altorf.

Notwithstanding the considerable elevation of this valley, and the coldness of the air even at this season of the year, it produces excellent pasture. The only wood therein, is the small plantation of pines above the village of Urseren, which
is

³ This village is commonly called *Andermatt*. RAMOND.

is preserved with uncommon care and reverence, and a small quantity of under-wood and stubbed willows, that feather the banks of the Reufs. In the adjacent country there are several mines of cryſtal; of which a conſiderable quantity is exported. The language of the country is a kind of provincial German, but almoſt every perſon ſpeaks Italian.

The valley of Urſeren is a ſmall plain ſurrounded by high mountains, covered with paſture to a conſiderable height, whoſe tops are barren rocks, in many parts capped with ſnow. Near the middle of this beautiful plain we turned to the left, and entered the valle St. Gothard, filled with the ruins of broken mountains; the Reufs, a moſt rapid and vehement torrent, burſting through it; on each ſide, immense ſhattered blocks of granite, of a beautiful greyiſh color (and of which the ſummits of theſe alps are compoſed) confuſedly piled together.

The valley of St. Gothard, though not ſo wild as that of Schoellenen, is yet exceedingly dreary. It does not contain a ſingle ſhed, or produce a ſingle tree; and the ſides of the mountains are barely ſprinkled with ſhort herbage. The extremity is cloſed by the ſtill ruder and naked rocks of the Feudo, ſupporting in its hollows vaſt maſſes of ſnow, while the ſuperb glacier of the Locendro towers above the adjacent heights. It is about two leagues from Urſeren to this place; but the road, conſidering the ruggedneſs of the rocks and the ſteepneſs of the aſcent, is not incommodious: it is from nine to twelve feet broad; and is almoſt as well paved as the ſtreets of London.

We are now lodged at a house inhabited by two Italian friars from the convent of Capuchins at Milan, who receive all strangers that pass through these inhospitable regions. One of the friars is absent, so that I am in possession of his bedchamber: it is a snug little room, where a man may sleep very well without being an anchorite; and which, after the fatigues of our journey, I enjoy with a satisfaction much too sensible to envy the luxury of a palace. Our host has just supplied us with a dinner, consisting of delicious trout, with which the neighbouring lake of Locendro abounds, eggs, and milk, together with excellent butter and cheese; both made in this dreary spot.

Upon our arrival we were rejoiced to find a good fire; the weather being so exceedingly cold, that I, who was only clad in a thin camlet coat, entered the house half frozen. It is singular to find, at the distance of only a day's journey, such a difference in the climate: the air is absolutely in a freezing state; and I just now passed a boy at work, who was blowing his fingers to warm them. If the cold is so piercing in the midst of summer, how intolerable must it prove in December? The snow begins to fall the latter end of September; and the lakes about this spot are frozen during eight months in the year.

I am just returned from visiting the sources of the Tesino and the Reufs; which rise within a short distance of each other. The Tesino has three principal sources in the chain of the St. Gothard. The first is a spring which rises towards the bottom of the Prosa, and is entirely covered with frozen snow, or, when that is melted, with fallen fragments of rock, through which it trickles in

numerous currents, that unite and help to form a small lake: from this piece of water it communicates with two other lakes, and issues in a more considerable torrent.

The lake of La Sella, in another part of the eastern chain, supplies the second source; and the third is furnished by the snows of Mount Feudo. These three sources uniting with another branch, that flows from the Furca through the valley of Bedreto, form one great torrent, which takes its course towards the south, enters the lake of Locarno, and traversing part of the Milanese falls into the Po.

The source of the Reufs is the lake of Locendro, an oblong piece of water about three miles in circumference, which is embosomed between the mountains of Petina and Locendro, and is almost entirely supplied by the immense glaciers which crown the summit of the Locendro. The stream issuing from this lake rushes down the valley of St. Gothard, and joining in the vale of Urseren the two branches which come from the Furca on one side, and from the Grison mountains on the other, flows towards the north into the lake of Lucerne, and from thence throws itself into the Aar.

In allusion to the opposite courses of the Tesino and the Reufs, M. de Boufflers said, that from the top of the St. Gothard, a man might spit into the ocean and the Mediterranean.

Within a day's journey is the source of the Rhine in the Grisons; and about the distance of three leagues, that of the Rhone in the Furca⁴: which mountain we shall pass to-morrow. We are still

⁴ The source of the *Aar* is not far off, in the same mountains.
RAMOND.

surrounded by very high, rugged rocks, and inaccessible glaciers; so that our view is much confined; and though I walked above a league towards Italy, in hopes of enjoying an extensive prospect over that delightful country, yet I could observe nothing but rocks, precipices, and torrents.

I am at this instant near ^s seven thousand feet perpendicular above the level of the sea: no inconsiderable height, most certainly. Nevertheless, if I gave credit to those, who assert, that this mountain is the loftiest point of Europe, I should raise myself in idea above twice as high: but I have reason to think, that this opinion is founded upon false calculations. Mikeli, who measured the principal mountains of Switzerland, but who is very inaccurate in his calculations, considers the St. Gothard as the highest; and he estimates its elevation above the sea as equal to 17,600 feet. But the truth is, that, so far from being of that height, it is by no means the highest ground of Switzerland; and there is probably not one mountain, either in Europe, Asia, or Africa, of that altitude. According to general Pfiffer, the summit of the St. Gothard rises above the sea 9,075 feet: an elevation considerably less than that of *Ætna* and *Teneriff*; and still more inferior to several mountains in the great chain of alps, to which we are bending our course.

^s According to Mr. de Saussure, the spot upon which the house of the Capuchin friars is built, is 1,061 French toises above the sea.

P O S T S C R I P T.

August 1785.

On my entrance into the little plain in which the friar's house is situated, although the air was exceedingly keen, I did not experience that piercing cold which I felt in 1776: but the day was fine, and the sun shone unclouded. When we arrived at the house, the friar was saying mass to an audience of about twenty persons; many of whom descend from the neighbouring alps, where they are tending cattle, to divine service on Sundays and festivals. At the conclusion of mass, the friar, whose name is Francis, immediately recollected, and received me with great satisfaction. He is well known to all travellers that pass this way, having already inhabited this dreary spot above twenty years. Since my last expedition, he has considerably enlarged his house, and rendered it extremely commodious. It contains at present, beside several sitting-rooms, kitchens, and one apartment for the family, nine small but neat bed-chambers appropriated to travellers. The expense of this addition has already amounted to L. 300, part of which he collected in various districts of Switzerland: and an equal sum is required to discharge the present debts, and to make the further necessary improvements; which sum he intends to procure by another collection.

Friar Francis obligingly accompanied me about the environs, and favored me with the following particulars, in addition to my former account.

The chain of mountains, which immediately surround this place, takes the general appellation

of St. Gothard; and its particular parts are called by different names; of which the principal are, the Salla, Profa, and Surecha, to the east; the Feudo, the Petina, and the Locendro, to the west; to the north, the Ursino; and to the south, the ridge of naked and piked rocks of the Val-Maggia. Of these the Feudo is the most elevated: its highest point rises above 2,000 feet above the plain in which stands the friar's house, and requires three hours to reach it. There are six pastures on the neighbouring heights; on which are fed two hundred cows, a hundred and fifty goats, and thirty horses.

On examining, at mid-day, Reaumur's thermometer, placed in the shade in a northern aspect, I was much surprised to find, that the mercury stood at $6\frac{6}{10}$ above freezing point, or 46 of Fahrenheit, although the northern wind was exceedingly keen, and, if I had judged from my own feelings, I should have concluded that the air was in a freezing state.

About four years ago, the elector of Bavaria sent to the friar several barometers, thermometers, and other meteorological instruments, which has enabled him to note the variations of the atmosphere, and to form a series of observations, of which he favored me with the following result.

In the most extreme cold he ever experienced in these parts, the mercury in Reaumur's thermometer fell to 19 degrees below freezing point, or — 10 of Fahrenheit.

In 1784. Greatest heat on the 13th of September, it stood at 13, or $61\frac{1}{2}$ of Fahrenheit. Greatest cold at — 17, or — $8\frac{1}{2}$ of Fahrenheit.

M. de Luc's barometer never rose

higher than — 22. 3. 1.

or fell lower than — 20. 9. 9.

It appeared from observations made in 1784, that the average state of the thermometer and barometer was as follows.

THERMOMETER.			BAROMETER.
Nine in the morning, {	$2\frac{1}{16}$ of Reaumur, or 28 of Fahrenheit		21 9 2
Mid-day — 0 —	or 32		21 9 3
Nine in the afternoon, {	1—3 lines, — or $29\frac{1}{2}$		21 9 4

In the same year it snowed during some part of 118 days; rained 78; cloudy 293; tempest, with hail, 12; thunder and lightning 22; rainbow 4. Halos round the sun 2, and round the moon 2. Serene days 87.

The Translator's Observations on the Passage of the St. Gothard.

We may look upon the *St. Gothard* as the centre of the chain of mountains, which the ancients called *Adula*, and where they thought that the Rhine, the Rhone, the Aar and the Tefino had their source, although they had no very accurate knowledge of them. These mountains, which divided the Rhetian from the Penine Alps, and a small part of the ridge which stretches towards the *Schreckhorn*, or terrible peak, the Romans dignified by the name of the higher Alps; because their progress was obstructed here, and their pride caused them to magnify the obstacles which it had cost them so much pains and trouble to overcome. Although the passage over the *St. Gothard*, and the surrounding mountains has since been opened, and frequented by all those who traversed the Alps; yet has the name of higher been continued to these mountains by travellers who always fancy the objects which they see larger than those which they do not see.

The *St. Gothard* has, therefore, been considered till very lately, as the highest of the Swiss Alps, even by observers who suffered themselves to be swayed by the prejudices of the vulgar: it is however certain that it is one third lower than *Montblanc*, which the Romans passed, and the peaks that have been measured since the higher parts of the canton of Berne have been explored by curious travellers.

But it is not so much the height of this mountain, as the road that leads over it which commands our admiration. Here we behold with amazement nature subdued by the efforts of human industry. This road which from *Altorf* to *Airolo* is two miles long, and between ten and fifteen feet broad; is almost wholly paved with square pieces of granite, and resembles a riband carelessly thrown over the mountain.

The valley of *Urseren* divides it into two branches, the first and most stupendous beginning at *Altorf*, winds along the vale of *Schællenen*; here the Swiss had the greatest difficulties to overcome; the road impending over the most dreadful steeps, rests on arches; wherever the rocks are almost perpendicular, the boldest and lightest bridges carry it over the precipice; and where the passage seems entirely shut up by a wall of rocks, it traverses for the space of eighty paces a mountain of granite.

I inquired about the name of the genius who had planned this road, and built the five bridges which connect its different parts; the people have forgot their benefactor, and attribute to the devil, what in their uncertainty they should have ascribed to an angel. The last of these bridges, the boldest, as being raised the highest over the precipice, bears the name of the *Devil's bridge*. Its form and dimensions are equally astonishing: the span is about thirty yards wide; it rests on protuberances of two opposite rocks, and seems sustained in the air by magic; below there is a precipice, where a torrent thunders over huge fragments of granite. It is impossible to conceive how the architect could fix his scaffolding and the center or mould necessary for the construction; what increases

our surprise is, that the whole is built of rough stones which are not easily bound by mortar.

I do not know how far those are deserving of our belief, who pretend, that the name of the architect who built this bridge was *Teufel*, Devil; adding that he was a native of Lucerne, where some of his descendants are still living, and bear the same name. The subterraneous passage through the rock of granite is not so old as the rest of the road; it was made in 1707 by *P. Moretini*, a Swiss born in one of the Italian Bailiwicks.

On the bridge next to this, which divides the district of *Urseren* from the canton of *Uri*, I observed the following inscription cut in Roman capitals of a very neat form, on the horizontal part of a piece of granite: it is almost obliterated, and I could only decipher it by the length of the shadow of the setting sun:

HIOANIELIE
MEIER SECKEL
MEISTER DES THA
LS VR SEREN

That is, *John Elias Meier treasurer of the valley of Urseren*. As in this country the dignity of treasurer is not inconsistent with the trade of a mason, it is probable that this Meier was one of the builders of this surprising road.

It is hardly possible to find a valley so uniformly verdant as that of *Urseren*; the hills by which it is encompassed are all smooth and green to their tops, it is one entire carpet; the ice and rocks which Mr. Coxe represents as the bulwarks of the valley, form its exterior enclosure. After the savage deserts from which I emerged, this valley seemed an elysium; the want of variety, however, renders it somewhat gloomy; chiefly on the side of the *Furca*, where no waving trees amuse the sight, no quivering foliage enlivens the solemn stillness which reigns in this region.

The tuft of trees above the village of *Urseren*, is the only forest in the canton; and it is kept in such veneration that it is death to fell a tree. No sacred grove was ever deserving of so much respect as is this Palladium of *Urseren*, which protects the village against the avalanches, that would certainly bury it, if they were not divided by this wood.

According to tradition the valley of *Urseren* was formerly full of forests, and I have been shown, not far from the *Furca*, a hill which had been all covered with wood. The same tradition adds that a vizard jealous of the felicity of this vale, burnt and enchanted the wood, and the dale must now be destitute of fuel. The fact seems to be, that this forest has been consumed by an accident, and that no trees can any more grow up; as the winds, which brush the heights, would certainly unroot the saplings unprotected by old trees. Most of the higher vallies of Switzerland offer the same phenomenon: the earth crumbles gradually down; the trees on the top lose ground, and are carried off by the blast, and those below deprived of shelter, are either rooted up by the wind or overwhelmed by the snow, which henceforward accumulates without impediment. Very soon the whole forest is laid waste, and will not grow up again, because the young trees are torn up the very first year. The consequences of this destruction are terrible; for the snow accumulates on the naked brows of the mountains, and melting on a sudden during the heats of the summer, pours down in torrents, and ravages far and wide the low countries, carrying off the mould, and stripping the mountains of their verdure. This snow rushes often down in one whole body and overwhelms the habitations below; or rolls into uninhabited vallies, which are never visited by the rays of the sun; where, lying exposed to the northern blast, it is congealed and transformed into a field of ice.

In the middle of the valley of *Urseren*, and toward the south, begins the ascent to the great *St. Gothard* or the second part of the road, which I have just been describing. This

region had been explored by the Romans since the days of Augustus; it is even thought that during the reign of Otto, they made a road on these heights; but I cannot conceive of what use this road could have been to them; as they knew so little of the *Furca*, and had much more convenient ways to enter into the Northern parts of the Alps.

The higher road offers a picture very different from that of the *Schællenenthal*; the summits by which it is commanded are not so threatening, nor are the precipices on which it impends so deep; the landscape is grander; more extensive, but less terrible. About midway of the ascent, from a savage desert, surrounded by lofty rocks, there is a fine view towards the North; at the end of a row of mountains descending gradually to a distance of fifteen leagues; I descried the two peaks of the *Hackenberg* at the foot of which I had rested six weeks before. This view gave me a pleasure which travellers alone can feel.

The summit of the *St. Gothard* is a platform of granite, surrounded by some high, irregular points which intercept the view on every side, and give it a very dismal aspect. Three small lakes and the dreary hospice of the capuchins alone interrupt the uniformity of this desert, where there is not the least trace of vegetation to be found. The gloomy silence which reigns on the platform is a new and surprising spectacle to an inhabitant of the plain; he does not hear the least noise; and the wind which ranges over these regions does not meet with a single leaf whose rustling might betray its passage; when it is very high, it groans in a fullen manner as it breaks on the points of the rocks. In vain would the adventurer climb the accessible summits which encircle this desert, in hopes to get a glimpse of inhabited regions, he would find himself in a maze of rocks and torrents, where he could discern far and wide nothing but barren peaks covered with eternal snow, piercing the clouds that scud over the vallies and cover them sometimes with an impenetrable veil. The eye kens nothing but a dark blue sky which

descends far below the horizon, bounds the landscape on all sides, and seems a vast ocean surrounding this heap of mountains.

The miserable inhabitants of the hospice are, during nine months of the year, buried under the snow, which in one night will often cover their house and stop up the entries. They are then obliged to make a kind of road from the windows of the upper story, which serve them for doors. At this dreary season these poor friars are often exposed to the severities of hunger and cold.

As it is impossible to dig a grave on this platform, the bodies of catholics that are found dead in the neighbourhood of the convent are carried down to *Airolo*; those of protestants are thrown into a pit, dug under a chapel, at some distance from the hospice, where they remain uncovered, for want of earth to fill it up.

From the *St. Gothard* the descent into Italy is much more rapid than into Switzerland, and I saw from the summit of the mountain, the whole way winding down towards *Airolo*. Of all the passages over the Alps which I have traversed none is so beautiful and less dangerous than this over the *St. Gothard*; the road is every where sufficiently broad, it is paved like a street, and for two months there is no snow on the platform; if it were not so rapid on the side of Italy one might undertake this route in a carriage*. Even the *Devil's bridge*, although very convex, is too broad to be in the least dangerous; and it would be easy to guard it by sidewalls.

During winter this passage is much more dangerous, particularly in the valley of *Schællenen*, between the *Devil's bridge* and that just before it, a tract of about a quarter of a league, where the snow falls often in great bodies from

* In 1776 an English gentleman went in his carriage from *Altorf* to the top of the *St. Gothard*; but could not descend in it into Italy.

the steep mountains on the side of the road. Here the conductors put hay into the bells of their beasts, and make the passengers march as silently and as fast as possible; because the least commotion in the air would loosen those enormous masses of snow that impend over the road; of which the least were capable to overwhelm the greatest caravan, or hurl it down into the precipice. All along the road they have erected small crosses in places where travellers perished of cold or by avalanches. The first time I saw them I was frightened. I happened to be quite alone; my companion fatigued by the passage of the *Furca*, which we had traversed on foot the same day, remained at *Urseren* to rest himself. I had set off late in the evening, and without any guide, on an excursion into the valley of *Schallenen*. In this dreary region the twilight was as frightful, as the aspect of the lofty rocks, and the roar of the torrents was terrible. The crosses on the road I took for so many signs of murders, and I counted sixteen between the two bridges. Full of this idea I made my arms ready, and accoutred as I was, must have appeared very formidable to the few passengers whom I met in my nocturnal course. It was night when I arrived at *Gastinen*, satisfied that this road is as sure as any in the middle of the country.

Near *Gastinen* I saw a huge piece of granite lying in a meadow, the inhabitants pretend that the devil brought it from the neighbouring mountains, in order to crush the bridge he had built on conditions which the people neglected to fulfil.

There are many bridges in the Alps, all which the inhabitants ascribe to the devil, and of which they tell the same stories. All these bridges were built about two centuries ago; some time after the victories of the Swiss; who were no sooner become independent, than they turned against nature the strength they had so successfully displayed against their tyrants. A nation never passes suddenly from tumult to rest; and the age which succeeds troublesome times is often that of genius and energy.

I asked once a clergyman of the Vallais about the origin of the idle tales, with which the people fill up the blank in the history of these stupendous buildings. The man did not want sense, and talked very rationally of the superstitions of his country, and of the unreasonableness to attribute to the devil, whatever seemed above human power. He could not conceive how it was possible to pretend that such a material work as the construction of a bridge could be the work of a spirit; and accounted for this silly tradition, by saying that the builder must have been of the race of the devil. The good man, though sensible that the devil could not build, thought it not improbable that he could beget children.

Nothing is so apt to lead to an absolute scepticism on human opinions, as to see a sensible man adopt ideas of whose absurdity he is convinced; and to hear all the philosophers on earth say with my clergyman. *My brother is stupid enough to believe that the devil has constructed a bridge, I, who am unprejudiced, can assure you, it was his son that built it.*

LETTER 28.

Passage and Glacier of the Furca — Source of the Rhone.

Munster in the Vallais, August 11.

I Arrived here late yesterday evening; and so fatigued that I was incapable of writing: but I am this morning quite refreshed with a comfortable sleep, and in spirits to continue my journal. I took leave of our host of St. Gothard, after having wished him a pleasant winter in that dreary situation; and walked alone, for about two leagues, down the valley of St. Gothard. I frequently quit my

company, and either go on before, or stay behind, that I may enjoy uninterrupted, and with a sort of melancholy pleasure, these sublime exhibitions of Nature in her most awful and tremendous forms. I entered the valley of Urseren at Hopital; and was again struck with the strong contrast between that cultivated vale and the desolate country I had just quitted. At the same time I enjoyed a most sublime view of the high chain that encloses the vale of Urseren; and particularly noticed the towering rocks, which stand in the country of the Grisons, one of them supporting on its rugged top a glacier, from which the Rhine takes its rise. We passed through the small village of Zundorf; and stopped at Realp, to procure some refreshment, and bait our horses. From thence we soon arrived at the extremity of the valley of Urseren; where we began ascending a path so narrow, steep, and rugged, that I could not forbear suspecting we had missed our way, as it seemed almost impracticable for horses: upon their arrival, however, I mounted, being fatigued with my walk from St. Gothard to Realp. It was a single path, up a steep mountain, where a horse, with some dexterity, could just put one leg before the other: and this path sometimes lay upon the edge of a precipice, very craggy and stony; where, if my steed had happened to stumble, we must both inevitably have perished. But as I knew he had no more fancy than myself to roll down the precipice, I flung the bridle upon his mane, and intrusted myself to his direction. Nor had I any reason to repent of my confidence: for, in the bad and dangerous parts, he never once tripped; where it was smoother and safer, indeed, he knew he had a licence to be more careless.

We came at length to a torrent, which we passed by means of a plank, after having got our horses over with some difficulty: a little way farther we arrived at another, deeper and more violent than the former, over which there was no bridge; nor the least appearance of any track on the other side; a considerable distance from any habitation; and our guide unacquainted with the road. After some observation we discovered, that the mountain had lately fallen down, and overwhelmed the path; leaving only a very faint narrow track on the side of the precipice: along which my companions scrambled upon their hands and knees. While I was crossing the torrent on horseback, I heard a scream; and turning round, saw one of our servants seized with a panic on the very edge of the precipice, and vehemently exclaiming, that he could neither get backwards or forwards. Nevertheless, with some assistance, he passed over; declaring, at the same time, that he would take care never to put himself again in a similar situation. We now regained a kind of path, but so extremely steep, that we prudently dismounted, and suffered the horses to make their own way. With much difficulty, and after having crossed several large drifts of ice and snow, the torrents at the same time rumbling under our feet; we reached, by a very steep ascent, the summit of the Furca. A number of rugged and forked rocks, piled one above another, have occasioned, it is said, this chain to be called the *Furca*. The country immediately around was as dreary and desolate as the valley of Schoellenen; all vegetation seemed to have ceased: lower down, the mountains were covered with herbage and sweet-scented flowers; near us,
but

but higher, on the left, between the Blaueberg and the Lungnetz, lay a large body of ice, from which issued a torrent⁶, probably one of the first sources of the Rhone. In a word, the several majestic objects that presented themselves to our view, formed a most astonishing and sublime scene.

From hence we descended broken rocks and craggy precipices for a considerable way. By this time I was so considerably fatigued, that I was glad to sit down, and take some refreshment consisting of bread, cheese, and hard eggs; the only provision we could procure at Realp. We were seated by a stream of clear water rippling down the side of a mountain, so exceedingly steep, that our humble repast would have rolled away, if it had not been well supported. In full view before us was the glacier of the Furca; an immense valley of ice, extending at least three miles in length, and near a mile in breadth between the Gletcherberg and the Satzberg, rocks more shagged, if possible, than any of the neighbouring mountains: it stretches from their feet, fills up the intervening chasm, and reaches almost to their summits. The sun shining in an opposite direction, it glistened like crystal; while the blue tints, reflected on the surface, appeared inexpressibly beautiful. The ice seemed to break in several parts, as we heard some loud and deep cracks; the torrent of the

⁶ I was informed by a friar of Realp, who is much used to travel in these parts, that this torrent, which is turbid in summer, is, in winter, as transparent as the clearest spring; and that when the accumulation of the snow prevents it from flowing under the glacier of the Furca, it then forms a lake, runs over the ice, and rushes to the Vallais with the waters it receives in its course.

Rhone at the same time roaring beneath. That river is chiefly formed by this glacier : the small torrent, which bursts from the body of ice between the Blaueberg and the Lungnetz, being joined by several streams, loses itself under the vast arch of ice that forms the bottom of the glacier ; issues considerably augmented ; and is the great and principal source from whence the Rhone takes its rise. The range of mountains on which we were sitting, was overspread with underwood and herbage ; and some cattle were feeding along the heights : a fine contrast to the sterility of the opposite chain ; which appeared, for some extent, nothing but bare rock, except where it was covered with ice and frozen snow.

After we had finished our banquet, and reposed ourselves for a short time, contemplating the singularity of the scene ; we descended to the bottom of the glacier, where we admired the Rhone breaking forth with violence from the bed of ice, near the huge fragments of a fallen rock. We now followed the course of that river, and proceeded down a mountain so steep, that the several parts of the road winding along its sides, were frequently paralled to each other. The scenery of the valley, which we now entered, was of the same kind as that of Schoellenen ; the Rhone foaming with amazing rapidity, and falling in a continual cataract at the foot of irregular and immeasurable alps. We travelled through this valley above two leagues, perpetually ascending or descending the rugged sides of rocks : one moment close to the river, and the next some hundred yards above it. At first the rocks were either bare, or studded with a few straggling pines ;

but as we advanced, they became more and more clothed with wood and verdure: still, however, we observed no traces of any habitation; and we had now measured at least fifteen miles, from our first quitting the valley of Urseren, without having seen a single dwelling. I was here so struck with the beauty of the forests through which we passed, and the luxuriance of the pasture, that I could not avoid expressing my astonishment on observing no appearance of any habitation in these delightful spots. I had scarcely made the remark, when four or five cottages, situated on the other side of the Rhone, upon a beautiful declivity, announced our approach to the Vallais. Not long afterwards, we unexpectedly came to an opening which commanded an extensive view of that fertile vale, containing several scattered villages. In this very spot a peasant of taste, has built his cottage. Here we quitted the bad road; and descended into the Vallais.

We had proposed passing the night at Oberwald, after the fatigues of the day: but, upon inquiry, we found it could supply us with no refreshment. The master of a little hovel, which was called an inn, pointed to a large cheese, and told us that was all his provision; it was his bread, his fish, and his meat. Meeting with no better reception at Obergestlen, we continued on to Munster, where we did not arrive till late: here we found an excellent inn for this country, which afforded good bread, and even some meat; but what was far more comfortable to me, a quiet room and a clean bed.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R 29.

*Mount Grimsel—Source of the Aar—Of the Chamois.*Spital ⁷ upon the Grimsel, August 11.

THE Vallaisans are remarkably attached to their liberty ⁸. Upon our quitting Munster, this morning, we joined company with a peasant, with whom we had a long conversation. He demanded our opinion of the country; and, pointing to the mountains, exclaimed: “Behold our walls and bulwarks; Constantinople is not so strongly fortified.” This upper part of the Vallais, I should imagine, is not much frequented by travellers, if we may judge from the curiosity of the people, who all came out to gaze upon us; and when they discovered that we were Englishmen, they observed us with greater attention. But what particularly surprised us was, that the peasant above-mentioned inquired concerning the state of our war with the Americans. It seemed indeed somewhat extraordinary, that a common peasant of the Vallais, should know there was such a place as Constantinople;

⁷ So the people call the houses, built on the great road over the Alps, for the reception of travellers. RAMOND.

⁸ This expression of Mr. Core seems to imply that the Vallaisans are distinguished by an extreme love of liberty; this sentiment is common to all the Swiss, and none of the most striking features in their national character; in my opinion nature has designed the Northern parts of the Alps, rather than the Vallais for the asylum of liberty. This innate love of independence I found no where so lively, and so natural as in the neighbourhood of the lake of the four cantons. R.

but it was not less surprising, that he should ever have heard of the contest between Great Britain and her American colonies⁹.

After returning about a league through the same fertile and well-cultivated country which we traversed yesterday, we left the plain, and ascended the Grimsel: one of those alps which separate the Vallais from the canton of Berne. We employed four hours in climbing a steep and craggy road to the summit; and should have considered the attempt as scarcely practicable, had we not been encouraged by the experience of yesterday. We crossed the several shades of vegetation: in the valley, and the lower parts of the mountain, corn and rich meadows; then forests of larch and pine; next, short grass, together with several species of herbs, that afford exquisite pasture to the cattle; to these succeeded the various tribes of mosses and lichens; and then bare rock and snow. It would be curious to construct, or at least to imagine, a scale of vegetation, according to the idea of a French writer; who asserts, that excessive cold and excessive heat are equally pernicious. The tops of these high mountains are barren, and produce no plants; and at certain heights nothing but mosses and lichens will vegetate: the same occurs in climates where the heat is intolerable; as no other vegetable productions are observed in the burning sands of Africa. The lichens and mosses then, which sup-

⁹ What would have been the surprise of Mr. Coxe if, more intimate with the democrates of Switzerland, he had heard a shepherd reason on the revolutions of Rome and Greece, and if he had found... what is scarce credible, Marmontel's Moral Tales in the library of a woman in the mountains of Hasli. RAMOND.

port the cold better than other plants, would form the first degree of a scale adjusted to determine, how far vegetation accords with the temperature of the atmosphere. The same families of plants, as they bear also the heat much better than any other, would occupy the last degree in the scale above-mentioned. Thus, according to this fanciful scale, the two extremes touch each other surprisingly.

From the top of the Grimsel we descended about two miles, and arrived at a small plain or hollow in the midst of the mountains; containing one solitary hovel: and from this hovel I am now writing to you. Notwithstanding the wretched appearance it made at first sight, we found in this desert spot all the accommodations we could wish for, except beds; and these are the less necessary, after our sound sleep last night. Not to mention excellent cheese, butter, and milk (our ordinary fare) we obtained some good wine, a small portion of kid, and a boiled *marmot*¹, which we have just devoured; although at another time we should have revolted at the very idea. The landlord is stationed in this forlorn region by the canton of Berne, and he resides in it about nine months. He usually arrives here on the first of March, and retires in the beginning of December. His business is to receive all travellers; upon condition, however, that they pay for their accommodations. When he quits the place, he leaves a certain quantity of cheese, hard bread, salted provision, and fuel, in case any unfortunate wanderer should happen to come this way, when the winter has set in: and we observed long poles fixed on both sides

¹ See an account of the Marmot in Vol. iii.

of the track, at small distances from each other, in order to point out the path to travellers, who may chance to pass this mountain after the snow has begun to fall. The road is seldom open for horses before the first of June². Near the house, upon the top of a small rock, our host has contrived a kind of little garden, by bringing some earth from the neighbouring pastures: and this small piece of ground supplies him tolerably well with turnips and cabbages; although, on account of the height of the circumjacent mountains, it does not long enjoy the warmth of the sun.

Numerous herds of goats are kept, during the summer months, upon these mountains: they are let out every morning to feed upon the pastures; and return every evening before sun-set to be milked and housed. It was a pleasing sight to observe them marching homeward in the same herd; and following each other down the broken precipices, and along the rugged sides of the rocks.

This hovel, beside the storehouses for cheeses, contains only a small kitchen, a bed-chamber appropriated to the family, and a room, in which we are now sitting. We occupy nearly one side: the other is taken up by our servants, the landlord and his wife, and half a dozen honest laborers: the latter are partaking of their homely supper, with all the relish of well-earned hunger; and are enjoying a short respite from their toil,

² In 1777 it was not passable for horses before the middle of June; and shut again towards the end of September. The passage over the *Grimfel* grows every year more difficult and dangerous; and after a severe winter the peasants are always afraid that it will not open again. RAMOND.

with that noisy mirth which characterizes this class of people.

The sources of the Aar are in these mountains. Near our hovel are three lakes that supply waters to that river, which rolls down in an impetuous torrent from the neighbouring glaciers³. While dinner was preparing, I walked by the side of that river searching for crystals; which are very common in these parts: we found pieces of divers colors, white, black, yellow, and green. These mountains certainly abound also in rich veins of gold, and other metals; a considerable quantity of gold-dust being found in the bed of the Aar⁴, and in the various torrents. I can conceive nothing more fatal to the interests of Switzerland, nor more repugnant to the liberties of the people, than to have these mines of gold or silver traced and opened. A sudden overflow of riches would effectually change and corrupt their manners: and it is an incontestible truth, that the real power of a country, not ambitious of making conquests, is derived less from the wealth than from the industry of its subjects; the happiness of a people, as well as of an individual, consisting in being contented.

³ These glaciers, which bear the name of glaciers of the Aar, form one of the finest masses of ice in the Alps; they branch out into an infinity of ramifications, uniting with those that descend from the Schreckhorn and the surrounding peaks. RAMOND.

⁴ It has been suggested to me, that no gold-dust is found in the Aar, until it has received the Reichen-bach.

What a chaos of mountains are here heaped upon one another! a dreary, desolate, but sublime appearance: it looks like the ruins and wreck of a world.

On the Grimsel, August 29, 1786.

You will recollect that, in 1776^s, I described the passage of the Furca as extremely difficult, and attended with some danger. But that was my first essay over the less frequented alps. How different are our sensations at different intervals! To-day, on measuring the same ground, though I did not find the road as *smooth as a bowling-green*, I yet never once dismounted; but rode with my Letters on Switzerland in my hand, occasionally making notes and observations: it must, however, be confessed, that in many parts, where a faint path along the crags and impending precipices was scarcely obvious, my situation was not very favorable for accurate composition.

From the top of the Furca, instead of immediately descending and pursuing the same road which I followed in 1776, we sent our horses forwards, and ascended the Galleberg to the upper part of the glacier of the Furca: from thence we looked down upon the Vallais and the Rhone flowing through it, as upon a small field watered by a rill; above and around, and as far as the eye could reach, we observed numberless pointed alps, and particularly that stupendous chain called the *Aar-Gletchers*, which comprises, among many others, the Finster-Aar-

^s See the preceding Letter.

horn, the Wetter-horn, the Jungfrau-horn, and the Schreck-horn.

The upper part of this glacier of the Furca, is far more beautiful than the lower extremity; the snow is of a more virgin white; the pyramids of ice more bold; and the blue tints more lively and animated. Having enjoyed in different directions this icy scene, we descended near the edge of the glacier, and refreshed ourselves with some water from two transparent springs called *Augstweicht-brunnen*, that burst from the sides of the rock, at a small distance from each other. We then went down a very steep descent, till we joined the track which I pursued in 1776. I recollected, with a pleasing satisfaction, the torrent, near which we eat on that occasion our humble repast; and came to the Rhone about half a mile below the spot where it bursts in two streams from the bottom of the glacier. In order to have a nearer view, we crossed the two streams, which, though scarcely three feet in depth, rushed with such exceeding violence, as almost to overturn the guide, who conveyed me across on his shoulders. Having admired the arch of ice, and paid our obeisance to the majestic habitation of the River-God, we walked at the foot of the Satzberg, and noticed several lively springs issuing from the ground, which the inhabitants call *cold waters*; and a little further three warm sources, in which the mercury in Reaumur's thermometer stood at ten degrees above freezing point, or 55 of Fahrenheit. These sources, uniting with several cold springs, fall, within a few paces from their rise, into the great torrent that flows from the glacier, and are usually considered as the *true* sources of the Rhone.

That honor is appropriated to these little rills, because, being of an equal temperature in all seasons of the year, they do not owe their origin, like the *cold waters*, to the melted snow and ice, and are as abundant in winter as in summer. It appears, however, extremely inconsistent, to dignify these little streams with the *exclusive* title of the sources of the Rhone; for that river undoubtedly owes its origin and greatness to the perpetual and inexhaustible supplies from the surrounding glaciers.

We had now employed above nine hours from the time of our quitting the valley of Urseren; and should have continued much longer amid these majestic scenes, if the declining sun had not reminded us of approaching night. Being still at a considerable distance from any habitation, we continued our route, and began ascending the Grimsel, near the warm sources above-mentioned. The track, though extremely steep, and as perpendicular as a man could well mount, was not dangerous, because the rocks were thickly covered with small shrubs, herbage, and mosses.

After an hour and an quarter's tedious ascent, we reached the summit of the Grimsel, and descending a rugged ridge of granite rocks, we looked down upon a lake, from which issues a stream that falls into the Rhone. A little further we passed several small rills and dark lakes which supply the Aar; in less than an hour we entered the road which leads to the Vallais, and came to the place of our destination, the same hovel on the Grimsel, where I passed the night on my former expedition. We arrived there about eight

in the evening, after a journey which employed us more than twelve hours.

No situation can exceed the solitary horror of the scenery on the top of the Grimfel. Its appearance resembled the inside of a mine, and seemed as if the bowels of the earth had been violently rent asunder; reminding me of that sublime description in the *Æneis*, when the inside of Cacus's cave is instantaneously laid open by the arm of Hercules.

*At specus, & Caci detecta apparuit ingens
Regia, & umbrosæ penitus patuere cavernæ:
Non secus, ac si qua penitus vi terra dehiscens
Infernas referet sedes, & regna recludat
Pallida, Diis invisa; superque immane barathrum
Cernatur, trepidentque immisso lumine manes* ⁶.

On entering the hovel I immediately recognized the same landlord, who was stationed here in 1776, to whom, at that time, I never expected to have owed a second reception in so forlorn a spot. While supper was preparing, a peasant and our guide, forgetful of his great fatigue, suddenly started up at the sound of their favorite air, the *Renz des vaches*, played upon a rebec by a shepherd, and danced several *allemandes*, perfectly in time, and not without grace; a

⁶ *Dryden's Virgil, Book viii.*

The court of Cacus stands reveal'd to sight;
The cavern glares with new-admitted light,
So pent, the vapors with a rumbling sound
Heave from below, and rend the hollow ground.
A founding flaw succeeds; and from on high,
The gods with hate behold the nether sky,
The ghosts repine at violated night,
And curse th' invading sun, and sicken at the sight.

picturesque group of spectators looking on and applauding.

August 30.

This morning we made a short excursion to the source of the Aar, which takes its rise in the neighbouring glaciers. In less than half an hour we entered a small plain, skirted by high mountains, and entirely closed by a rugged chain of alps, over which tower the Finster-Aar and Lauter-Aar-horns, and at whose feet stretches a glacier so entirely covered with earth and stones, as to bear, at a small distance, the appearance of a sand-hill. From this glacier issues a "*torrent roaring loud*" of troubled waters, which is the source of the Lower Aar, and joins, in a few hundred paces, another stream called the Upper Aar, that falls from the Zinkeberg: the union of these two torrents forms the Aar, which rushes over a stony bed with great impetuosity. At present it runs in a narrow channel; but at the first melting of the snow in spring, it overflows the whole space between the mountains, and becomes a temporary lake.

Our guide is a *chasseur*, who frequently ranges over this vast chain of alps, in pursuit of the chamois, an animal remarkable for its activity in scouring along the craggy rocks, and in leaping over the precipices. He informed me, that this glacier is the extremity of a valley of ice about twelve miles in length, and from one to four in breadth: it then divides into two branches; one extends towards the Schreckhorn, and the other towards the Vallais.

He expatiated with great enthusiasm on the profession of a chasseur, though extremely laborious, and at times dangerous. He usually kills from six to fifteen chamois in a year: with the flesh, which is very delicate, he helps to support his family, and disposes of each skin for a guinea. He uses a rifle-barrelled gun, and generally shoots them at the distance of three or four hundred yards.

The chamois are very timorous, and consequently watchful animals. They usually go out in herds of twenty or thirty; and while they are feeding, one of them posted on an adjacent height stands *centinel*, and is relieved every quarter of an hour by another. The *centinel* looks around with great solicitude and attention; and on the least suspicion of danger, alarms the herd by a shrill cry; instantly the whole troop decamp, one following the other.

The chamois feed on various kinds of herbage, and particularly on the *Lichen Rangiferinus*, or rein-deer lichen, which is found in such great quantities, as in many parts to cover the summits and sides of the mountains. In order to procure their favorite food in winter, they, like the rein-deer, clear away the snow with their fore-feet, frequently thawing it with their breath, for the purpose of loosening it more easily. But when, either from the depth or hardness or the snow, they cannot penetrate to the lichens, they browse on the saplings of pine and fir.

In summer their bodies are of a yellowish brown, and whitish under the throat; the hair is short and smooth: in winter their coat lengthens and grows dark, so as to resemble that of a bear,

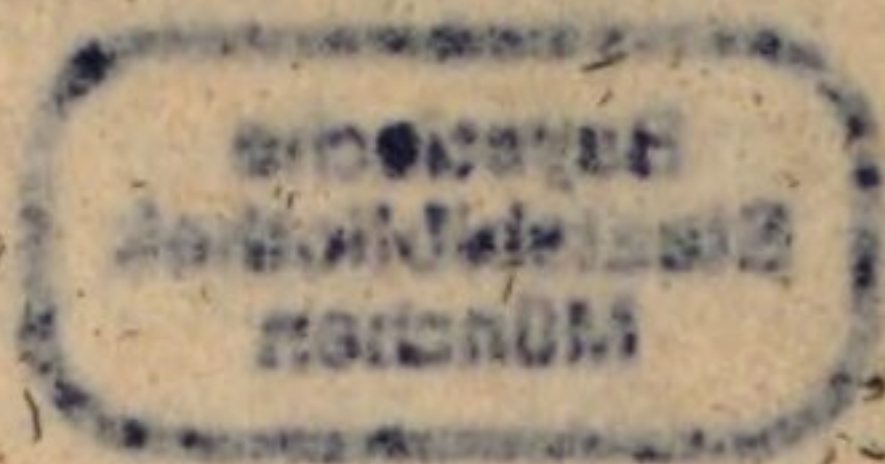
and entirely to disfigure them. Sometimes, but very rarely, they have been found speckled, or of variegated colors; and lately, a chamois, entirely white, was shot upon the Engelberg. It was in all other respects similar to a common chamois; and it is uncertain, whether it owed its color to age or accident.

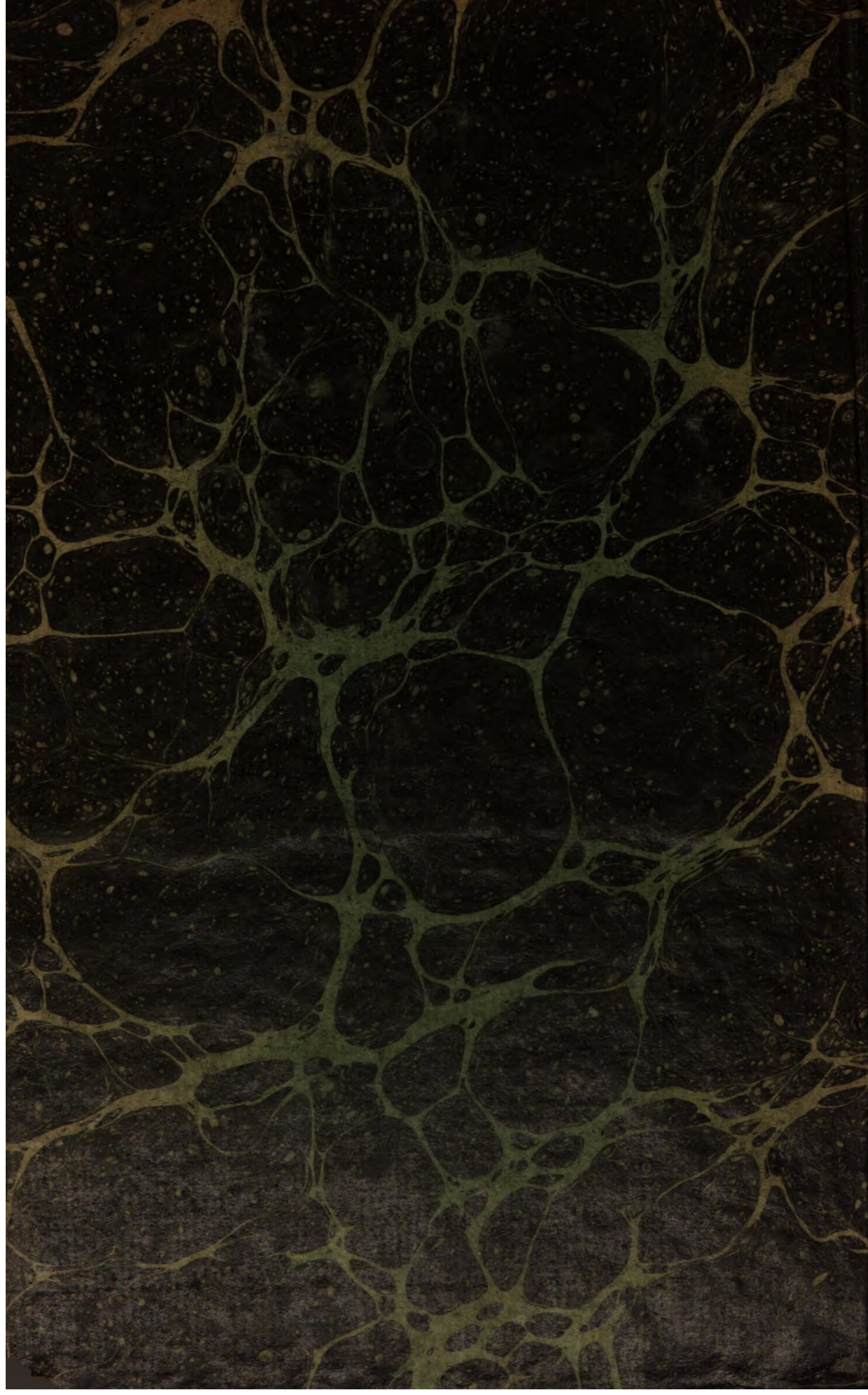
Linnaeus has classed the chamois in the goat genus, under the name of *rupicapra*, or mountain-goat; his acquaintance with the antelopes having been too slender to enable him to form a genus of antelopes, which Pallas first constructed, and where he has judiciously placed this animal. The example of Pallas has been followed by Pennant and succeeding zoologists.

I am, &c.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.







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